Awaiting military service — Page 2

Check out our all-star basketball photos — Pages 12 and 13

Prosperity predicted for Niagara Region — Page 11

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Jan. 28, 2000 FREE VOLUME 30 ISSUE 8

Niagara News is produced by the Journalism - Print students at Niagara College, Welland Campus

Niagara's Ernell Ellis drives to the basket. Ellis scored eight points for the West squad. The East beat the West 90-69, in the men's all-star game held at Niagara College on Jan. 22.

Photo by Mike Dilts

See more photos on pages 12 and 13

Board member resigns

By JOHN ROBBINS
Staff Writer

Members of Niagara College's Board of Governors accepted the resignation of board member Brian Merrett, chair of the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC), during the board's Jan. 20 meeting.

Merrett's letter of resignation was not read into the minutes of the meeting, but Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College, said the resignation was due to the amount of work associated with Merrett's position as head of the NPC.

The NPC is currently in the midst of a five-year, $100-million capital improvement plan.

Merrett had not attended a regular monthly meeting of the Board of Governors since June 1999.

BRIAN MERRETT

In an interview with the Niagara News, Merrett said he came to his decision to after "much soul searching" and meeting with Patterson.

"It was the best thing to do," Merrett said.

"If you're not there, I feel you should let someone else be (there)."

During the meeting, Patterson cited Merrett for his many contributions to the college over the years.

Although he is no longer a governor, Merrett said he will continue to work for and on behalf of Niagara College.

"I'm not abandoning the college. I'm still a part of the team."

In addition to the regular duties of a board member, Merrett served on the board's property committee and the nominating and new member search committee. He was involved in establishing the new Glendale campus, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and played a role in developing the new Business *Administration — Golf* Management program.

Continued on page 5

Men's team on winning streak

By MIKE WENCEL
Staff Writer

Injuries hampered the Knights, but they went on to win a huge game in double overtime.

The Niagara men's basketball team defeated Sault College on Jan. 21 by 92-87.

The Knights, who have been on a recent hot streak after a one-point win against Fanshawe Falcons of London, are now unbeaten in three straight. This latest win brings their record to 4-2.

Enter Curtis Francis, 20, from the Business Administration program.

The 6'1" guard from Brampton took control right from the start of the game. He scored 34 points, the game high scorer.

Francis, who played the entire game, played the point for the injured Haldon Hutchinson, who had suffered a quad injury in the Knights' previous game against the Sault.

"I look towards Haldon for a lot of leadership and hints throughout the entire game," said Francis, adding, "Haldon is a valuable player when he isn't on the floor as well."

Francis, who took over in the second half, again and again hit outside jumpers and drove it to lane for the three-point play. He scored 26 second-half points.

"I knew I had to step it up. It just shows how hard our team works and how much they love to play the game," said Francis.

Although the Knights pulled off the win, Francis said fatigue was a major factor in the game as the Knights only used six players in the entire match.

"We didn't rebound as well as we should have due to the lack of rest," said Francis.

"We played well, but not to our expectations due to all the injuries and sickness in our starting five."

Francis, who was the star of the night, complimented the whole team on how well they played defence and contributed to the team effort.

Three other players scored in double digits as well. Ernell Ellis had 21 and Aaron Paisley and Andrew Higgins each had 12 points.

The Niagara's next home action is on Feb. 4 against Lambton College from Sarnia.

See related photo on page 15

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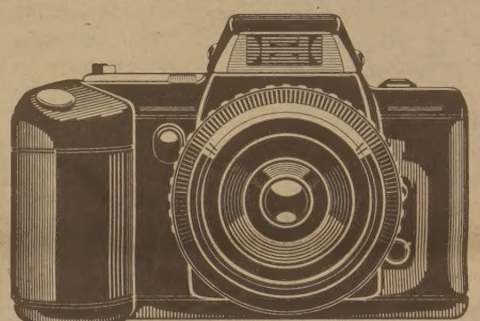

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INTERNATIONAL

Taiwanese men worry over military obligation

By NATSUKO TAMURA
Staff Writer

He's reached the age, so there's now no way to get away from his duty.

Eric Yang, who just turned 20 this month, is back at Niagara College after visiting his home in Taiwan during the holiday break.

Yang says he had been away from home for more than a year, so it was "really" good to be home, seeing all his family members and friends.

While Yang had a good time at home, he says one problem emerged.

He got a draft notice from the government.

In countries such as Korea and Mexico, all men at age 20 must serve in the military. In Taiwan it's for about two years. University students or the physically or mentally injured are, however, eligible to postpone the

'I want to continue my education here.'

period of service with an official letter to the government, he explains.

Fortunately, he was 19 when he left Taiwan and he could come back to Canada.

"I was sad at that time," he recalls, "because I knew I cannot come back home for at least two years." If he goes back home for a vacation, he says the government won't let him leave the country again.

"I want to continue my education here, so I made up my mind."

Eric Yang, 20, in the English as a Second Language program, takes a break in the International office, S102, Welland campus.
Photo by Natsuko Tamura

He'll serve in the military after completing his post-secondary education in Canada.

Asked about the military obligation, he says, "Nobody wants to go there. Everyone back from the military says he wasted two years."

In addition, he says, they get paid "very" little — about $200 to $250 a month, which he thinks is not rewarding.

It's hard for a young man full of dreams to put aside what he desires to do and sacrifice two years for the government, he adds.

On the other hand, Yang says he thinks the armed forces service is necessary for Taiwan to stand against China, even though he's unwilling to be cooped up in the military for a couple of years.

He views it as a question of members of a nation willing to keep the

'Everyone back from the military says he wasted two years.'

nation at peace versus the preserving their individual's rights.

"China is dangerous and has power, so we have to be prepared," he says, referring to the unpleasant political relationship between China and Taiwan.

While the Chinese communist government wants Taiwan to be part of China, Taiwan doesn't want to, Yang says.

"We have more freedom (as an independent nation)."

Yang says the Taiwanese government, as a democratic state, is gradually changing for the better, but he hopes to see more changes in the near future.

This year of the millennium is the year of the dragon. According to the Chinese calendar, the traditional New Year's Day celebration will be held on Feb. 5 across China and in large Chinese communities throughout the world.

HEALTH

Relieve stress through aromatherapy

Uses scents, oils, incense, candles, body massage

By MANDI SPEELMAN
Staff Writer

The room was dimmed by candlelight as slow music played in the background. The table was set for clients to experience the relaxation of a popular healing method called aromatherapy.

"When they (clients) leave here they tell me they feel like they're floating," said Leanne Guay, 27, an aromatherapist at Suntastic on Niagara Street in Welland.

She said aromatherapy is a technique using an all-natural blend of essential oils.

It can work in two ways. It can be massaged into the body and helps the muscles rid themselves of aches and pains that way. The second is through smelling the scent of burning candles and incense.

Guay said she creates different aromatic blends to help a person for various reasons. If her client's stress level is high or if the client is experiencing a severe life crisis or may just want to relax, she tries to help by mixing oils and massaging them into the body.

She said, however, she has to be careful mixing the oils since they must contain the same properties. For instance, you can't mix a relaxing oil with one that is supposed to make you more energetic. That mixture can give the client a headache.

"The one body part I will not massage is the stomach," Guay says. "It can affect the digestive system and can cause constipation.

"Aromatherapists cannot use raw essential oils on the skin because it can burn the person. You have to be careful because with some oils, they can be very sensitive to sunlight, so you cannot go into the sun right away; otherwise, you can get a reaction."

During the process, Guay said she likes to listen to the music of Enya and massages to the rhythm of the music. She never does more than five massages a day, since it's like a workout. Her muscles start to ache as well. The energy she uses in her arms as she pushes on the client comes from her legs and stomach.

"You know you're doing it wrong when your hands begin to ache. I have clients where they are so relaxed that they fall asleep on the table. I make them wait at least five minutes to get up; otherwise, they can get dizzy if they quickly sit up afterwards.

"It really is an art. You almost have to be born with this talent of massaging and relaxing people, because some can do it really well while others can't."

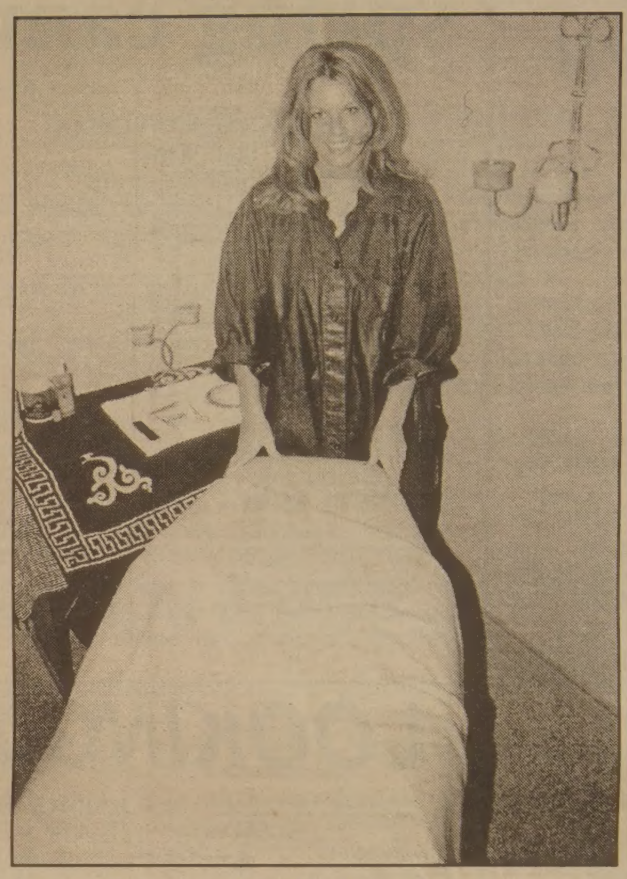
Guay said the most popular scent she uses, one she uses generally all the time, is a mixture of sandalwood, neroli and ylang ylang.

Ylang ylang helps with muscle aches and pains. Sandalwood has a woodsy scent and encourages relaxation.

"I have guys who come in during their lunch break from work and they don't want to go back smelling like lavender, so the woodsy smell is very neutral for both men and women."

Neroli, which comes from an orange tree, helps relax the nervous system, and when mixed with other specific blends can help fight depression. Citrus and geranium are good scents as well and are good for cellulite. To treat a cold or cough, eucalyptus can be diluted in a carrier oil such as grapeseed and applied directly to the chest area.

Essential oils are expensive, varying from $35 to $95 for a little bottle, although only a small amount is used during the oils' mixing.



Leanne Guay, 27, of Welland, stands in a room she uses when doing aromatherapy at Suntastic in Welland.
Photo by Mandi Speelman

"I always had an interest in helping people and making them feel good about themselves. Through the group homes I was always the one focusing on *ëokay letís*, bringing the hairdressers in and helping everyone get haircuts, so I was always on that aspect of things. It was pretty easy for me to make that change from social worker to aromatherapist.

"I always had an interest in massage. When I was in college I used to be the one that would always massage everybody in the class, so I decided to expand my interest and took a course in aromatherapy."

"Aromatherapy isn't like taking registered massage therapist courses. There's a course at Niagara College that is teaching aromatherapy that just teaches you how to blend various oils and how to create your own blends of oils."

Guay took a six-week course on aromatherapy at Looks by Lora in Welland.

"My instructor, Jane, said, 'You know exactly what you're doing. You may not know the proper terms but with the amount of pressure you use on the person (which varies), you know what you're doing.'"

Guay started working at Suntastic two years ago when she took a body-sugaring course. Her teacher told her that if she wanted a full-time job she could have one there. Guay told the owners during the interview she was interested in expanding her skills through an aromatherapy course.

She said she finds aromatherapy becoming more popular. The $29.95 price she charges is reasonable, she adds, since registered massage therapists charge from $45 to $85.

For those who prefer the do-it-yourself approach, you can try aromatherapy at home by going to either the Panhandler or the Dollar Store and buying relaxation candles and incense. The key thing is to meditate while they're burning.

"I get a better satisfaction at this job where I know that I have helped someone by making them relax for an hour and make them forget about their busy lives. It makes me feel good."

Your Student Administrative Council presents

Can We Talk?

Dan Patterson invites all students and staff to an open forum to discuss expansion plans for the Maid of the Mist Centre.

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NIAGARA COLLEGE CANADA

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HEALTH

Health Bus rolls into town

By CASSANDRA SIMONS
Staff Writer

A two-year joint effort between the Wise Guys fund-raising organization and the Regional Municipality of Niagara Health Department has resulted in health services now being provided on a bus.

The health bus is a large 11-metre school bus transformed into a health room, said Marilyn St. John, director of clinical services.

The bus has been converted into two rooms. At the back there is an examination table while the front has been transformed into a dental office.

"The purpose of the health bus is to provide health care services for those that are homeless or at risk of being homeless and people that are isolated from the traditional means of service," she said.

The health bus provides services across the Niagara region. On Mondays the bus is in Niagara Falls. Tuesdays, the bus is in Welland and St. Catharines, and Wednesdays, in Crystal Beach. Thursdays the bus alternates between Beamsville and Prudhomme's Landing, and on Fridays, the bus is in Fort Erie.

The bus was donated in its finished form by the Wise Guys fund-raisers. The services were created when the Wise Guys approached the Regional Municipality of Niagara Health Department.

"Then we recognized the need for the services."

The staff are all members of the public health office and the upkeep operating funds are brought in by fund-raising, "along with the combination of community partnerships."

St. John said 272 individuals have been assisted since the health bus started in September.

CNIB's Focus on Crocus spring campaign kicks off

By SHANNON PALOMAKI
Staff Writer

Get them before spring has sprung!

Place your orders now for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Niagara's fourth annual Focus on Crocus campaign.

The CNIB Niagara is selling only the purple variety of crocuses beginning Feb. 7.

Costs for the purple Dutch crocuses pots are $4 each or three pots for $10. Handpainted clay and galvanized pots with purple crocuses inside and out are $12 each. You can add a note card for an additional $1. There is no charge for delivery of 15 or more pots.

Whether for you, your mother, father, co-worker, grandparents, teacher or secret admirer, it is a gift that will last and supports a good cause, organizers say.

The CNIB helps the blind to live independently in a sighted world and is committed to helping them strive. More than 2,000 blind and visually impaired children and adults will benefit from the money raised in the campaign.

Another event happening around the country during February is White Cane Week, which was established in 1947 by the Canadian Council of CNIB. The white cane is the symbol of blindness, courage and an independent spirit.

Celebrations are between Feb. 6 and Feb. 12.

A braille essay contest will be included as national Braille Day is held on Feb. 9 in conjunction with White Cane Week. The World Blind Union — Canada, in partnership with The Canadian Braille Authority, The Canadian Braille Literacy Foundation, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind and Human Resources Development Canada, is planning the celebration. For more information those interested can reach the Web site at www.brailleday.starcs.on.ca.

For more information on the local campaign, call Sharon Gleason, volunteer crocus campaign co-ordinator, at 688-0022.

LOOKING FOR A HOUSE?

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Student Satisfaction Survey coming Feb. 7-11

kpi

Watch For It!

An Open Letter to Students

Second and third year students will already be familiar with the **Student Satisfaction Survey** – part of a series of five Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which all Ontario colleges implemented last year.

This year's survey will be conducted during the week of February 7 – 11. All full time students, except for those in term I, will be asked to complete the survey, which takes 20 to 30 minutes. It will ask you questions about your satisfaction with your educational experience at Niagara College and is completely confidential.

All KPI results are tabulated by survey management consultants from outside the colleges, and overall results will be published by all colleges as required by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Results from the KPI surveys of our students, graduates and employers will help colleges build on their successes and identify areas of improvement. Ultimately, a percentage of our provincial funding will depend on our performance as measured by these KPIs, giving the college strong incentive to provide quality programs and services.

Last year's student satisfaction survey results indicated that a clear majority of students were satisfied with the quality of their overall educational experience at Niagara. I believe this reflects a college-wide commitment to your success and to providing you with the best education and training possible.

I want to thank you in advance for your co-operation in completing the survey. Your participation and feedback is very important to the future of the college.

Sincerely,

Dan Patterson, President

NIAGARA COLLEGE CANADA

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Board of Governors thanks Y2K Task Force

By JOHN ROBBINS
Staff Writer

If you're a member of Niagara College's Y2K Task Force, "thanks for nothing" is the highest compliment anyone could pay you.

Niagara College's Board of Governors approved a motion to extend an official thank you to task force members for ensuring the college's vital computer infrastructure survived the turn of the century.

Hans van der Slagt, vice-president of administration and chair of the Y2K Task Force, gave a final report to members of the Board of Governors during their Jan. 20 meeting.

In an otherwise clean bill-of-health, van der Slagt reported only "minor glitches." This included a food and beverage system error at the Maid of the Mist Centre, in Niagara Falls, and some problems with the college's GroupWise intranet software, through which college staff communicate with each other.

The final countdown to the new year was "a bit of an anticlimax," said van der Slagt, in a later interview.

Van der Slagt, "key college personnel" and members of campus security stood vigil at the Welland campus during the hours preceding midnight on Dec. 31. On hand to observe and test the college's multi-million dollar computer system, van der Slagt and the others watched CNN on television to see what was happening as the calendar changed to Jan. 1, 2000, in North America's eastern-most time-zones.

"It was a bit of a hardship for those of us who had to be away from our families (on New Year's Eve)," said van der Slagt.

"We began to relax when we saw the rest of the world coming through things with very few problems (reported)."

According to van der Slagt, advanced planning for potential Y2K-related problems began about three years ago and was headed up by Beth Weldon, director of information services, as her position was then called.

By June 1998, the Y2K Task Force had been established to identify vulnerable systems, ensure compliance and show what van der Slagt called, "a senior management commitment to the issue."

The task force met bi-weekly and reported each month to the college's audit review committee. They developed a reporting system that "gradually brought the whole college into the process."

In addition to this "cross-college" communication, van der Slagt said the task force co-ordinated its preparations with that of local municipalities and of utility providers who supply water and electricity to the college, in the event of a disruption of services.

Van der Slagt said the task force had devised, and put into place, a number of contingency plans.

If all else failed, there was insurance.

While the college's existing insurance policies would cover damage to college property, it doesn't cover those making the decisions.

At a cost of about $4,000, the college purchased additional insurance coverage to protect members of the Board of Governors and college administrators from personal liability associated with Y2K-related malfunctions.

Following the board's approval of the resolution, David Miskolczi, labour representative on the Board of Governors, suggested the board's appreciation be committed to paper in the form of signs posted throughout the college.

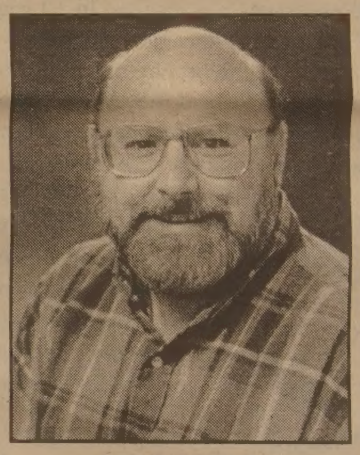
"Let's let everyone know the kind of hard work that was done," he said.

New scholarship honours Duffy

By JOHN ROBBINS
Staff Writer

The life of a friend and supporter of Niagara College will be remembered through a new scholarship in his honour.

Niagara College's Board of Governors approved a motion to create a scholarship in memory of board member Michael Duffy.



MIKE DUFFY

Duffy, 53, vice-chair of the Board of Governors and a local entrepreneur, died Dec. 26, at his home in Grimsby, Ont.

"A scholarship in Mike's honour is a fitting way to recognize his many contributions to the college, as well as his involvement and dedication to the agri-business industries," said Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College.

"It is a small but meaningful way to help preserve the memory of a great citizen and committed friend and supporter of the college."

At the beginning of the Jan. 20 Board of Governors meeting, Patterson led those in attendance in observing a minute of silence in Duffy's honour.

Duffy was a founding partner of Niagara Under Glass, a large greenhouse and tourist attraction. Before this venture, Duffy was the former head of NET Corp., the Regional Municipality of Niagara's economic development and tourism agency.

While the criteria for the scholarship has not been finalized, Christopher Blake, executive director of the Niagara College Foundation, said it will be an entrance scholarship to a Niagara College horticultural program.

Blake said the college plans to donate $1,000 in seed money to the new scholarship.

"Mike meant a lot to all of us, in so many ways," said board member Pia Sandstrom Arnds, of Welland, who chaired the meeting in the absence of Tom Gauld, chair of the Board of Governors.

"I would like to thank those who put this (scholarship) together," she said.

"I think it is a very moving expression."

Memorial services were held at Trinity United Church, in Grimsby, at which Patterson and Gauld represented Niagara College.

The Board of Governors will be sending a letter to Duffy's family informing them of the board's decision to name the scholarship in Duffy's honour.

Student representative saves board meeting

Reles's arrival gives board a quorum

By JOHN ROBBINS
Staff Writer

A combination of bad weather, illness and two vacant seats left Niagara College's Board of Governors in a quorum quandary, at its Jan. 20 meeting.

The closed session of the board, which usually precedes the regular open session, had to be postponed until later in the evening when it became apparent there were not enough members of the board present to proceed.

Faced with canceling the meeting, a telephone call was placed to Kevin Reles, student representative on the Board of Governors, asking him to come to the meeting.

Reles, who said he had decided to stay home and catch up on his homework, drove from Port Colborne through a snowstorm to get to the board meeting, which was being held in the Hennepin building, at the Welland campus.

Reles's speedy arrival allowed the Board of Governors to proceed with the open session meeting, which was only slightly behind schedule.

When fully constituted, the board numbers 17 members, including Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College. To achieve a quorum, 11 members must be present.

When asked if, in the past, the Board of Governors had ever failed to achieve a quorum for a regular meeting of the whole board, Darrell Neufeld, executive assistant to the president, said, "It's never been an issue."

"This was an unusual set of circumstances which came together," said Neufeld, pointing to the board's two vacant positions and the inclement weather.

Reles suggested another circumstance, which may have contributed to the low turnout — the flu.

"I think just about everyone has been sick with it," he said.

Merrett resigns seat

Continued from front page

Before his appointment as chair of the NPC in January 1998, Merrett was a regional councillor representing the City of Niagara Falls from 1985 to 1997. He was regional chair from 1991 to 1997.

Merrett was appointed to the Board of Governors in August 1998 for a three-year term ending September 2001.

Following the Dec. 26 death of Mike Duffy, the board's vice-chair, Merrett's resignation brings the number of vacant seats on the Board of Governors to two.

Just how quickly the vacant seats will be filled is not known. Pia Sandstrom Arnds, chair of the board's nominating and new member search committee, was unavailable for comment at the time of publication.

What the book says . . .

"Where within any 12-month period a member of the Board of Governors, other than the ex-officio member, not having been granted leave of absence by the Board of Governors, does not attend four cumulative regular meetings or three consecutive regular meetings of the Board of Governors, the Board of Governors may by simple resolution declare his membership vacant."

— Bylaw 1.9, Niagara College Board of Governors

Niagara College — Board of Governors —Attendance

(February 1999 to January 2000)

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Bignucolo, Amy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Davidson, Peggy	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Di Martile, David	P	P	P	P	A	A	A	P	P	P
Gauld, Thomas	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
Harding, Molly	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Merrett, Brian	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	A	A	A
Milne, Ian	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P
Miskolczi, David	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P
Munroe, William	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A
Neale, Andrew	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	P	A	P	P	P
Patterson, Dan	P	P	P	?	P	P	P	P	P	P
Reles, Kevin	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	P	P	P	P	P
Sandstrom Arnds, Pia	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sevenpifer, Deborah	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Sharpe, Barry	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	P	P	A	P	P
Warbis, Joan	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A

P = present; A = absent n/a = not a board member at that time ? = minutes of meeting are unclear
Only those who were a member of the Board of Governors as of Jan. 1, 2000, are shown.
There were no board meetings in July or August. *Source: Minutes of the Board of Governors 1999 (regular meetings)*

EDITORIAL

The Niagara News is a practical lab for the Journalism-Print program, covering the college community and other areas of interest.
Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the management of the Niagara News or the administration of Niagara College. P.O. Box 1005, 300 Woodlawn Rd., Welland, Ont. L3B 5S2
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Government must settle Aboriginal issues

Only the fear and ignorance of the Canadian people have kept Aboriginals from claiming what is rightfully theirs.

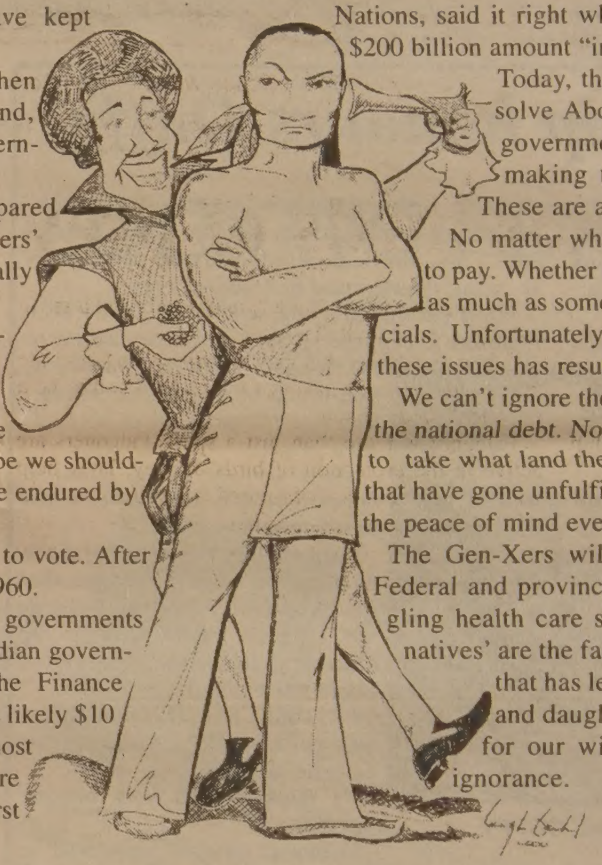
Make no mistake about it. In the 18th and 19th centuries, when explorers first made contact with the Aboriginals of this land, they blatantly exploited and stole from this spiritual, unmodernized people.

Diseases brought by the Europeans attacked an unprepared Aboriginal population. Alcohol and firearms became the foreigners' means of trade. Treaties granting them rights and land went partially or completely unfulfilled.

In the 1870s, the Aboriginals were sent to schools to be assimilated into society. Their culture and language would be replaced by the teachings of European society and Catholic values. Children would be punished if caught speaking in their native tongue. It wasn't until the '70s our government realized that maybe we shouldn't do this. It has also come to light the physical and sexual abuse endured by some students during their stay at these schools.

Ottawa was just as quick in granting our Aboriginals the right to vote. After serving in two world wars, they were finally given that right in 1960.

We do not have the right to say what's done is done. Our past governments are to blame, not Aboriginals. By ignoring these issues, the Canadian government now faces up to $200 billion in settlements, or so the Finance Department says. Indian Affairs has assessed the amount at a more likely $10 billion because the Aboriginals often settle for less. Just as in most claims cases, you ask for the highest amount but settle for the more reasonable figure. Phil Fontaine, head of the Assembly of First Nations, said it right when he called the government's release of the $200 billion amount "irresponsible fear mongering."



Today, the government has finally made baby steps to solve Aboriginal issues. The Nisga'a have their own government and territory to run. Abuse claims are making their way to the Supreme Court of Canada. These are a start to the end of their struggles.

No matter what the bill is, it will be a substantial one for us to pay. Whether or not we knew the land was going to be worth as much as some of it is now is the fault of unwise elected officials. Unfortunately, our government's sluggish attitude towards these issues has resulted in 10 years in unpaid dues.

We can't ignore the Aboriginals any more, just as we can't ignore the national debt. No, they don't have special rights or the privilege to take what land they want. What they do have are legal contracts that have gone unfulfilled and cases of abuse that must be settled for the peace of mind every human being deserves.

The Gen-Xers will be settling debts for most of their lives. Federal and provincial debts, bankrupted pension plans, a struggling health care system and payments to settle cases like the natives' are the fault of our forefathers. Let us be the generation that has learned from its mistakes so that when our sons and daughters rise to power we will be the ones known for our wisdom and sacrifice, not our cowardice and ignorance.

Sam Bayly

Not everyone in the world needs to be an American

It is time to send the boy back to his father.

For those of you who have been living outside the grip of television and other media venues, I am talking about Elian Gonzalez.

He was found more than two months ago clinging to an inner tube after the raft his mother and "common-law husband" (I prefer boyfriend) were on capsized off the coast of Florida. His mother and her boyfriend were apparently fleeing the strife in Cuba but died in the attempt.

Elian was sent to live with relatives in the United States he had never met before. A great-uncle living in the Cuban-exile community in Miami let the boy into his home. Now it seems he has kidnapped poor Elian. The child has been given a sickening number of gifts, new clothing and a way of life far better than any he probably ever saw in Cuba. But he can't go home. The law has determined Elian's father has a right to his child, but groups in the States are now appealing the decision. How long will they debate? Until Elian is old enough to vote and go back on his own?

He has quickly become the poster child for anti-Castro groups and left-wing churches across North America. He is not Castro's child. These church groups obviously do not believe in the sanctity of family, nor can they seem to support the relationship between a father and his son.

I do not believe the conditions in Cuba are the best. Compared to the North American materialistic way of life, the conditions in Cuba are near the bottom of the list. I do, however, believe a father's love surpasses any materialistic demands.

The issue is not going to go away if the United States keeps this child in the country. Where will it end? Will any Cuban parents be able to strap themselves and their child into a dinghy and set out in some of the most dangerous waters in the Atlantic Ocean? There is no love in putting your child at an indeterminable risk, a risk that could ultimately lead to the child's death. Will any wannabe Chinese immigrant sealed with a child in a box to be sent to Seattle or Vancouver be allowed to stay because a precedent has been set?

Sure, growing up in communist Cuba may not be the best life for someone according to our "civilized" standards, but neither is growing up separated from your true family.

Matt Holley

Your voice or opinion is welcome in our Letters to the Editor section. Our policy regarding letter submissions is this: All letters must be received on the Friday one week prior to publication. Each letter must include the writer's name, college identification number and program of study.
All letters must be signed and include a day and evening telephone number for verification use only.
All letters can be mailed or brought to the Niagara News newsroom, Room S212, Simcoe Building, Welland Campus.

PROFILES

Guelph grad helps design Glendale campus

With help from Landscape Technician program, Jodi Liptrot designs, builds water features

By MEGAN ROSS
Staff Writer

This campus is your campus; this campus is my campus, although when it comes to the grounds of the Glendale campus, it's in the hands of a University of Guelph graduate.

Jodi Liptrot, 26, of Waterdown, Ont., is the third University of Guelph graduate to take part in the planning and development of the Glendale campus.

Liptrot was hired as part of the University of Guelph and Niagara College partnership, which involves Guelph's Landscape Architectural program graduates designing a 25-year project for the college campus.

Liptrot, who graduated from Guelph's Landscape Architectural program last April, carries the title of ecological landscape designer at the college.

Jodi Liptrot poses with her dog Sophie

Photo by Megan Ross

The first designer's task was to come up with a concept of how the campus grounds should look in 25 years.

Liptrot took over the position and based her work upon the previous concepts but added a few new details.

"(It's) really a progression," said Liptrot. "My job this year is designing beautiful water features."

She said her job is also to look "at making changes where changes are necessary, based on (previous) designs," and to create "more detailed drawings."

Liptrot works with the students of the Landscape Technician (Co-op) program at the college. The program works with her plan for class projects and for experience in the field.

According to Liptrot, program students have already built part of a wall in the rose garden and have helped build a path that she designed, with interlocking bricks.

Liptrot applied for the job at Niagara after Walter Kehm, her contact at Guelph University and her thesis adviser, approached her class with the opportunity.

She sent a résumé to the college, got an interview and "got it (the job)," Liptrot said.

She has gained much experience working here and said she's learned a lot. She now wants to go out on her own and "test the waters."

Liptrot is planning to start her own landscaping business once she is finished working for the college. She said it will be based in Waterdown, but she would like to move into the Niagara region.

Falconry protects birds of prey

By MIKE DILTS
Staff Writer

Falconry isn't a sport for everybody.

"It takes a lot of dedication," said David Gibson, 46, of Port Colborne. "It's almost 24 hours' work a day."

Gibson is a falconer at The Ontario Hawking Club in Balls Falls.

In the sport of falconry, the trainer takes his bird out to hunt for prey such as rabbits and opossums.

"It's teamwork," said Gibson. "The birds help us and we help them. We help to get the prey to show itself. We dig through holes and bushes."

A falconer must put a lot of time and effort into training hawks or falcons to obey commands.

It also takes money for the right kind of equipment and facilities, such as a leather glove the falconer makes and a bird leash, which is a small bracelet around the bird's ankle. The trainer also needs the right material to build a cage for the bird and must get the necessary hunting licenses.

Beginner falconers have a sponsor, a fellow falconer, who helps guide them through the bird training and give them advice.

Falconers must display a "great deal of interest" in the outdoors and wildlife.

"They must show that they are willing to put in the time to learn what it takes to train a bird and to be a falconer," said Gibson.

Falconry is more than just a sport. Falconers are active in the protection of birds of prey. They help with the rehabilitation of injured wild birds and help with pesticide effects studies. Falconers on two recent Cooper's Hawk studies in Ontario provided nest locations.

They volunteer their time to educate others on falconry by visiting schools and talking to the people they meet in the field.

Falconers also helped by founding and running the major breeding facilities and donating most of the original breeding stock.

"That's why it's 24 hours of work a day," said Gibson. "It isn't just about hunting with birds; it's about showing the beauty and preserving the wildlife."

The only permissible dates for hunting are Oct. 20 to Feb. 20.

Emergency personnel and college security staff responded to a medical emergency in the Simcoe building on Jan. 27. The student, who was not named, was taken to the hospital.

Photo by Matt Holley

Mr. Fix-it at Niagara College

By JENNIFER MAGO
Staff writer

His other name is Mr. Fix-it.

Ron Mottola, 45, of Niagara Falls, has worked as a media technologist for 15 years at the three campuses of Niagara College.

Mottola's co-worker is Byron Gracy, 24, of Niagara Falls, who graduated from Niagara College and works as a technician here.

RON MOTTOLA

Mottola said an outline of what they do, can be broke down into three functions. First, they provide technical support for the teachers. The second is to provide training and instruction to the faculty. The last one is new. They will provide technical support for special events.

Mottola is usually scheduled to work at the Glendale campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake, but he may be found at the Maid of the Mist Centre in Niagara Falls once a week and is scheduled at the Welland campus twice a week. He works part-days, either morning or afternoons. Gracy works from the Welland campus.

Gracy said they take care of everything that the Learning Resource Centre provides in services. He said the duo does everything from changing a light bulb to fixing a VCR.

"We do not do the same thing everyday and it's constantly changing," said Mottola, adding their job is always changing because they provide emergency service.

"It gets very hectic, but (it's) a lot of fun," said Gracy.

'We do not do the same thing everyday and it's constantly changing.'
— Ron Mottola

Both men say they enjoy their jobs and the staff.

"We have fun with this job, not to say it's all fun," said Mottola. "It's hard work, but we enjoy what we're doing and we work with a great group of people."

Gracy said he finds his job gratifying because it's centered on helping people.

Mottola gives a reminder to staff and students that there are "only two" of them and they like to hear the good comments, as well as when something is not working.

PROFILES

Life for gang member goes wrong

Shunned from his family, left with no money, no home, no family, no friends, no future and no way out

By MONICA PALINIEWICZ
Staff Writer

Gangs are everywhere. They inconspicuously parade the streets, with the only notable difference among the various gangs being the colours of their mandatory bandana or beaded piece of jewelry.

Each colour represents a different group, most of whose members are against members from other gangs.

Once initiated into the group, members are there for life, recruited into a family of crime.

Daniel Campbell, 18, of Connecticut, says that being in a gang is what brought him to his "present status."

"I was a troubled kid," says Campbell. "I have an attention deficit disorder (ADD) so I never did well in school. I was kind of a loner, skipped school a lot and just walked the streets. That's how I got into a gang. They accepted me for who I was. They were family."

Soon Campbell underwent a noticeable change. He says his parents thought that his "strange behaviour" was due to "depression or some kind of other mental illness."

'The initiation was brutal but I was young and naive.'

"They hooked me up with a bunch of counsellors and experimented on me with everything from Ritalin to Zoloft. They wanted to control my violent mood swings. They didn't know, till I was too far gone, that it was the gang and the street drugs that messed me up," says Campbell.

This was the beginning of Campbell's "downfall."

"The initiation was brutal, but I was young and naïve," says Campbell. "The guys would take turns punching and kicking me in the stomach to see how much I could take. They hit so hard I was coughing up blood, but I didn't go to the hospital. I had to prove to them that I was tough enough to be in their family."

Campbell had other degrading and senseless tasks to perform in order to be "recruited" into the gang. From "breaking and entering, to drug runs," to mindless "beatings" of innocent by-standers, Campbell did it all for the sake of "loyalty."

'No matter what I do, I can't escape my past. I still wear the colours down here as a form of protection. I just want out of this.'

However, Campbell's life of crime soon caught up with him.

At 15, Campbell says he was arrested for breaking and entering and possession of a stolen firearm. He was put in a juvenile detention centre for six months, only to return to the streets upon his release.

"My parents gave up on me. They found out about the gang, the drugs, the stealing and they were fed up," says Campbell.

Having nowhere else to go, Campbell turned to his "other family," where he says he spent days "passed out in a rat-infested apartment with seven other guys," and his nights "in the streets, patrolling the gang's territory."

After a year of countless crime sprees and "playing hide and seek" with authorities, Campbell says he has "had enough."

"I went down to Iowa, thinking 'I can escape this mess.' I have family here so I thought I was okay. I was wrong."

News of Campbell's delinquent habits traveled to his family in Iowa, causing them to "turn" him away.

'I want to apply for a job, even a temporary one, so I can get money to go home, but who wants to hire a gang-banger with no education?'

Campbell says, "No matter what I do, I can't escape my past. I still wear the colours down here as a form of protection. I just want out of this."

Campbell, now living in an emergency housing shelter, is "stranded" in Iowa with no money for transportation back to Connecticut.

"I want to apply for a job, even a temporary one, so I can get money to go home, but who wants to hire a gang-banger with no education?"

Campbell says his plans for the future include "getting a G.E.D. (general education diploma), going to college and making up" with his family.

"Experiencing life with a gang has taught me a valuable lesson in life: Don't trust anyone and don't rely on anyone to help you through life. You end up lost and on your own in the end," says Campbell.

In the end, Campbell says that his "experience" helped him "realize" what his true "ambitions in life are."

"I've seen my friends get shot, stabbed, killed. It's sad. I just want to have a normal life again. If I could turn back time, I would never, ever have taken the offer of joining a gang. It was the biggest mistake of my life."

"Well put together, I enjoyed every minute of the exhibition. Excellent!" – Trevor B.

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CAMPUS COVERAGE

Two fund-raisers set to help Many Hands projects

Therapeutic association riding receiving help from Many Hands

By SHANNON MASTALER
Staff Writer

Niagara College Special Event Management (Post-graduate) program students are helping out with Many Hands.

Many Hands, a group of students and volunteers, are on their way to help I CAN Therapeutic Equestrian Riding Association of Niagara (I CAN TER) with renovations and site improvements.

Ridgeway-based I CAN TER was selected as the group's organization last semester. The date of the project is April 15.

Davis Veres, co-ordinator of the program, said the uniqueness of the project is that all the work is done in 24 hours. "150 volunteers get together and get everything done in only one day."

Students are letting others know about Many Hands in various ways. Last Tuesday, students went to classrooms all over Niagara College's campuses recruiting volunteers. A video has been produced to let people know how to "get involved," and a web site is being worked on, said Veres.

Two fund-raisers have been scheduled to help Many Hands.

The first, Starry Nights, a silent auction, will be held Jan. 28 at Chateau des Charmes, 1025 York St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. Tickets are $20, and the price includes cocktails, a winery tour, hors d'oeuvres and a performance by a live jazz band, The Rodger Niznik Trio.

"We are hoping for a crowd of around 100 to 150 people," said Veres.

The second fund-raiser, Mardi Gras, is scheduled for Feb. 15. It will be held at Arizona's bar, and will be "decorated to Mardi Gras theme and there will be drinks and food with the same idea.

"We are hoping to get about 300 people."

Admission to the Mardi Gras night at Arizona's is $5.

Everyone is invited to attend both these fund-raisers. For information on Many Hands and fund-raisers call Ext. 6404.

Rama offers Award of Excellence

By CASSANDRA SIMONS
Staff Writer

Aboriginal post-secondary students needing extra cash for the school year have a chance to win an Award of Excellence from Casino Rama, in Rama, Ont.

The Award of Excellence is handed out to eight "deserving" students, said Judy Blake, director of public relations for Casino Rama.

"Our feeling is that students never have enough money. We'd like to help out with their financial needs," she explained.

Casino Rama is offering eight awards annually. The awards are each $1,500 and are to be used for the student's needs while going to school.

To receive the award, students must fill out an application form. The application has questions as basic as name, age, and school the student attends to questions about the student's plans for after graduation, career hopes and hobbies.

To qualify for the Award of Excellence, the student applying must include transcripts of academic grades, proof that he/she will be returning to school, a letter of reference from a member of the faculty at the school, and a letter of recommendation from a community business person.

"It isn't good enough to be just a good student. The recipient must also have a strong, determined community leadership character," said Blake.

Last year the award was handed out in June. This year the award may not be handed out at the end of the school year, but rather in the late fall, closer to Christmas.

"The end of the school year may be too late. The money might be more useful to a student during the actual school year."

All of the recipients of last year's awards sent the Casino Rama a letter to thank the organization. "One student sent his marks to us at Christmas, which was not needed, but was very thoughtful of him."

"Students in post-secondary school have to struggle, especially aboriginal students. It may be the first time the student is away from his community, and may be the first of his community to go on to post-secondary school. They're (the recipients) role models for the future and need to be honoured not only for the academic strengths, but also for their help in the community," said Blake.

"Natives are judged by what they bring back to the community. These students need to be held up in both honour and respect."

More information about the awards program or when application forms are available can be obtained from Corporate Affairs, Casino Rama, Box 178 R.R. 6, Rama, Ont. L0K 1T0.

Performance indicators affect provincial funding

By MARTIN McQUAIG
Staff Writer

Niagara College is set for the second round of the annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The provincial government mandated KPIs will begin the week of Feb. 7 with the student satisfaction surveys. These surveys, administered to the college's first-year and second-year students, give the students an outlet for constructive criticism of Niagara's facilities and services.

"It's really critical that students understand the context (of the survey)," said college president Dan Patterson. "On the one hand, people need to be honest about where we need to improve. On the other hand, it's important to stress the things we do well."

The results of the KPIs will be tied to "up to 10 per cent" of the province's funding to the college next year, said Patterson.

Although last year's overall approval rating was 75 per cent, the college made improvements in areas the students felt needed attention.

Patterson said colleges should "celebrate success where they're doing well, and look at responding to constructive concerns."

Among the improvements made were correcting problems concerned with the start-up of the Glendale campus, the student feedback process, financial assistance and employment services, and facility improvements such as the renovations, which included new chairs and carpeting in the Hamilton Room at the Welland campus.

Patterson said it is important not to make generalizations about any college based on early results of the KPIs. He said the true value of the KPIs will show up in the long term.

He added that if the college "constantly is thinking how (we) can improve, (we) will inevitably get good survey results. If you believe in your institution, believe in your programs, and you want students to give a good rating, then I think that's what drives you."

'92 Journalism-Print grad 'had a true gift for writing'

Doug Morton, a former newspaper reporter, editor and a graduate of Niagara College's Journalism-Print program, died at his home on Jan. 21 after a courageous battle against cancer.

Morton graduated from the program in 1992. He was 50 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Wendy Morton. They have no children.

Morton was born in Toronto and raised in Calgary, Alta. After attending the University of Alberta, he worked in western Canada before moving to the Niagara region.

He was a reporter with several area newspapers before becoming editor of the Niagara Advance in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1994.

He later joined the Anagram Rehabilitation Community, based in St. Catharines, where he was a rehabilitation educator.

While at the college, Morton wrote for the Niagara News. He did stories on the college's Board of Governors and interviewed former Ontario premier Bob Rae and former college president John Saso.

"Doug had a true gift for writing," says Phyllis Barnatt, Journalism-Print program co-ordinator. "In his hands, words painted exquisite pictures and made the unclear clear. His attention to detail and his determination to seek out and verify information were unmatched. And, despite the reputation journalists may have, Doug was, in every sense, a gentleman.

"He took his responsibilities seriously, sometimes too much so, and always considered the impact on his readers and interview subjects. Most of all, we recall his wonderful sense of humour and his way of turning an ironic eye on the human condition.

"I'm extremely proud to have had the privilege of being one of his teachers and counting him among our graduates and as a fellow professional journalist."

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday at the Parish Centre St. Vincent DePaul, 220 Davey St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Donations can be made in his memory to the Canadian Cancer Society, Box 434, Niagara-on-the-Lake LOS 1J0.

Students receive Millennium Scholarships

Niagara College students receive $3,000 federal awards as part of celebration for the millennium

By TARA PURPURA
Staff Writer

The Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation has awarded several students from Niagara College a $3,000 prize as part of Canada's celebration of the new millennium.

The following students are recipients: Lisa Barrow, second-year Law and Security Administration; Christina Hildebrant, first-year Dental Hygiene; Brad Moscato, 1996 Journalism-Print graduate now studying at Brock University; Shannon Peters, second-year Business Administration — Human Resource Management; Nellie Pijl, second-year General Arts and Science and Elizabeth Semple, second-year Business Administration — Human Resource Management.

Any students who have received one and have not been mentioned please visit the newsroom in S212, or call 735-2211 ext. 7753 to announce your award.

PERSPECTIVES

God's existence probed by professor

Using science, laws of physics in search for divine power

By MATT HOLLEY
Staff Writer

Science was used on Jan. 20 to attempt to explain God's place in the universe.

Professor George Ellis spoke at the fifth annual Humanity and the Cosmos Symposium held by the Brock Philosophical Society in the Concordia Seminary at Brock University in St. Catharines.

Using overhead notes and charts, Ellis explained "from the bottom-up" the laws of physics and then moved on to God's place in the universe.

He said the universe evolved 12 million years ago from the "Hot Big Bang." Ellis said humans must have evolved from the same bang.

Ellis said science may explain the laws of the universe, but they cannot explain ethics or morality. "Science cannot supply you with ethics," he said. "It (ethics) must come from philosophy."

Ellis was born and raised in South Africa during the time of apartheid. Ellis is a Quaker, but he is also a cosmologist, attempting to explain the mysteries of the universe through physics. He attended Cambridge University in Great Britain where he met and worked with famous scientist Stephen Hawking in co-authoring the book The Large Scale Structure of Time and Space.

In 1973, he left Cambridge University to become a professor of applied mathematics at the University of Cape Town. There he helped improve the living conditions for blacks in "white-only" Cape Town.

He said there is a hierarchy of structure starting at the bottom, which is the basis for all higher order.

He said the laws of physics appear to be fine-tuned to allow the existence of human life. Humans do have free will, which can be used for good or evil.

Ellis said at the top of the hierarchy is God. This explains the order within the universe. He said biology and physics operate impartially. He explained this by telling the audience "rain will fall on good and evil alike."

He said he believes the highest moral state is "kenosis," a God-inspired principle of sacrificing yourself to help others, as evident by his work in South Africa.

Ellis disputed the argument there are fixed rules to be followed on the path to kenosis. He said he believes each person must make moral decisions based on the circumstance.

"You have to decide which religious experience is genuine," he said, adding his discussion could open interfaith talks about the nature of science and religion.

Brock, Niagara celebrate Black History Month

February recognizes plight of black people everywhere

By NATSUKO TAMURA
Staff Writer

February is the month designated to celebrate all the trials, tribulations and victorious moments in Black History in Canada.

Many historical and educational activities organized by Brock University will take place in the community during the month of February, said Jennifer Gillam, a member of the committee representing Niagara College.

"Brock University has invited Niagara's students to join in the celebration. Everyone is welcome to participate in any events," she said.

It kicks off Thursday night, Feb. 3, with a "world premiere" concert by the Nathaniel Dett Chorale, with special guest, Joe Sealy.

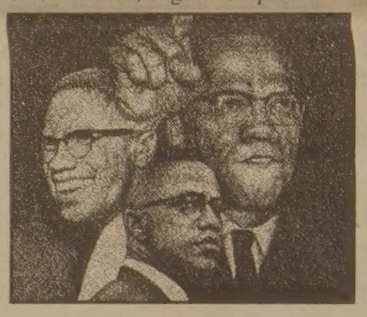
The Chorale is the Toronto-based "first professional chamber choir in Canada dedicated to performing a full range of Afrocentric choral music," said a media release. Joining the Chorale for this performance is Joe Sealy's 1997 Juno Award-winning jazz musician, who was influenced by the urban black community established in Halifax during the 1800s.

The show starts at 8 p.m. in the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre, Centre for the Arts, Brock University, St. Catharines. The ticket price is $15.

The other events are the following.

On Feb. 10, Leslie McCurdy will perform an "incredible" play called the Spirit of Harriet Tubman, at 7 p.m. in the Wainfleet Township Hall. Admission is $4 in advance and $5 at the door.

Prof. B. Powers, from the College of Charleston South Carolina, will be the guest speaker on Friday, Feb. 11, in the Alumni Lounge in the Schmon Tower, Brock University. His lecture, titled Slavery and Freedom in the Old South: The Case of Charleston, begins at 7 p.m.



On Saturday, Feb. 12, a full-day bus tour of "Underground Railroad Sites in Niagara" will allow participants to explore the slave trails in the region, including Fort Erie, Queenston Heights, Niagara-on-the-Lake and St. Catharines. The bus departs from Brock University at 10 a.m. Ticket prices are $15 for students and $20 for adults.

Costs include bus rental, entrance fees, donations, and honouria

For tickets or information, contact Gillam, ext. 7730, or email at jgillam@niagarac.on.ca or Dennis Essar at dessar@brocku.ca.a

Thinking about applying for a college program starting September 2000?

Remember that applications for any college program must go through the Ontario College Application Services (OCAS) in Guelph, Ontario. For all programs, your application should reach OCAS **before**

February 1, 2000

The quickest and easiest way to apply is on-line @

www.ocas.on.ca

You may also pick up an application form at Niagara College's Info Centre, Admissions or Registration Offices.

NIAGARA REGION

Region's economic prospects bright

By SAM BAYLY
Staff Writer

Niagara's financial groundhogs have poked their heads out and they're predicting sunny days ahead.

The region will have "three to four years of solid economic performance," says Richard Egelton, the deputy chief economist from the Bank of Montreal.

The bank, along with the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corp. and the Niagara Parks Commission, has put together an economic report titled The Niagara Region Economy: Prosperity in 2000 and Beyond. The report was presented to the press and businesses on Jan. 21.

The study focused on Niagara's three areas of industry: tourism, manufacturing (primarily metal fabrication and auto parts), and agriculture (particularly tender fruit).

Tourism will "carry the ball" during this period of growth, says Egelton. The predicted increase in the Canadian dollar from 69 to 71 cents will not change the way Americans are spending in Canada, he says.

Furthermore, Egelton says the U.S. economy will continue its growth, although not at its current speed. He adds a change in U.S. fiscal and monetary policies is expected to slow down the growth rate from four per cent to two per cent over the next couple of years. After the drop, it's expected to "bounce back" to three per cent, he adds.

The tourism industry is expected to invest $1 billion over the next four years. By 2002, the projected number of visitors to the region is 20 million, an increase of 6.6 million from 1997.

Despite a projected decrease production, the manufacturing industry has a bright future in Niagara. Both General Motors and Magna intend to expand their operations here, with the former investing $465 million into its St. Catharines plant.

The sale of premium wines has increased 30 per cent since 1995 and sales are expected to grow even higher. In a press release, the bank says the "agri-food sector, despite the difficulty to evaluate its prospects because of sensitivity to weather, is well-established with a solid basis for future success."

Overall, capital spending is at a high in Niagara. The expansion of the auto companies and the tourism industry's $1 billion expansion plans will have a positive effect on employment and housing.

Other projects include the upgrading of the Queen Elizabeth Way, twinning of the Peace Bridge, changes to the border facilities, and the expansion of Brock University.

Canada has had "exceptional growth in employment," says Egelton.

Richard Egelton, deputy chief economist for the Bank of Montreal, (second from left) fields questions at a press conference held at the Victoria Park Dining Room and Cafeteria in Niagara Falls. With him are, from left, Alan Teichroeb, the manager of business development for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corp., Robert Hogue, economist for the Bank of Montreal, and John Potts, banking manager for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corp.
Photo by Sam Bayly

The report predicts 5,000 new jobs will be created in the region this year. Next year it expects 9,000 new jobs.

The report predicts 5,000 new jobs will be created in the region this year. Next year it expects 9,000 new jobs will be created with another 5,000 to 10,000 new jobs following in the two years after that. It "is the largest four-year gain (in employment) since the '80s," says Egelton.

He adds the area still lacks in the number of high-tech and financial companies. Niagara needs a "competitive tax base" and a "quality of life that attracts" these firms. He says the area should be looking to attract smaller firms instead of larger companies such as Nortel. By having these firms, Niagara would be able to soften the blow during times of recession.

One risk facing the region is the possibility the Canadian dollar will increase value in because it is undervalued. However, this is "unlikely," says Egelton.

Although, he says, he's not "overly concerned," the boom-bust cycle is still a "significant risk" if U.S. inflation increases resulting in higher interest rates and, therefore, less spending.

The American and Canadian governments should continue to lower their national debts and "keep a lid on spending" so their economies can continue at their current pace, says Egelton.

The report says, "The Niagara Region is set to thrive in this North American economic environment. The current boom in capital investment and success of its tourism sector will provide ample stimulus to economic activity in the years to come. This will exert a profound impact on employment, income, consumer spending and on the demand for housing. These factors will likely propel the region to the forefront of the province in terms of economic growth."

Restructuring options presented to regional council

By TARA PURPURA
Staff Writer

Do you think your city has what it takes to thrive? If you live in the Niagara Region, think again.

The Berkeley Consulting Group, hired by the Regional Municipality of Niagara, has created a set of options to meet provincial requirements for restructuring.

The options were based upon the population and income per capita of each town or city in the region and its ability to support some services maintained by the region.

The aim of the provincial restructuring policy is to reduce the cost and number of local governments within Ontario.

Cities within the region have been undergoing assessment by the group regarding municipal restructuring in an effort to devise their own governance structure before the province imposes one.

There are three options.

The first is called the modified status quo, which divides the region into six single-tier municipalities.

The second is the Multi-City option. This option has three possible components: three north/south units, a modified north/south as a four-city option and a south shore option.

The third option is the UniCity. This would consolidate the region and its 12 member municipalities into one government.

The consulting group will modify this list before the final report is due on March 1.

Public meetings are being held across the region at which the consulting group will receive advice and ideas from local citizens. The meetings were postponed last week and are now planned to take place after Feb. 8. The Berkeley Consulting Group is based in Markham, Ont.

Dates and times for the meetings will be published soon.

These are the options Berkeley Consulting Group, of Markham, Ont., has presented to the Regional Municipality of Niagara. They will be refined and finalized by March 1.

Information obtained from the Regional Web site at: **www.governiagara.com/images/berkeley/options1_1.jpg**

The Modified Status Quo:
Six single-tier municipalities

—Western Alliance — Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, all or part of Pelham (50,000 to 60,000 population)

—St. Catharines, including Thorold (150,000 population)

—Welland, possibly including part of Pelham (50,000 to 60,000 population)

—Niagara Falls, including Niagara-on-the-Lake (88,000 population)

—Fort Erie (27,000 population)

—Port Colborne including Wainfleet (25,000 population)

The UniCity

Consolidate the Region and all 12 municipalities into one government.

—Establish a ward system to provide local representation across the region.

—Each ward to be a reasonable population range to allow for smaller rural wards

Multi-City

A. Three North/South units

—Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham and Wainfleet (70,000 population)

—St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland, Port Colborne (215,000 population)

— Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Fort Erie (115,000 population)

B. Modified North/South as a four city option

—Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham and Wainfleet (70,000 population)

—St. Catharines (130,000 population)

—Thorold, Welland, Port Colborne (84,000 population)

—Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Fort Erie (115,000 population)

C. South Shore Option

—Fort Erie, Port Colborne, Wainfleet and Welland (99,000 population)

—St. Catharines and Thorold (150,000 population)

—Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake (88,000 population)

—Western Alliance: Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, and Pelham (63,000 population)

Andrew Richards, #33, ties to block his opponent's shot.

Ernell Ellis, #22, of Niagara College goes up for a shot.

Jocelyn Getsinger, from Fanshawe College, scored 14 points and won the MVP award.

Brenda Chambers, from Humber College, played for team Bacvar and scored 16 points and earned the MVP award.

OCAA All Star Basketball Weekend

Lucas Spear, of Sir Sandford Fleming College, was named MVP for the East.

Haldon Hutchinson, #21, of Niagara College shoots for a basket while Chris Kloosterman, #35, of Durham College tries to block Hutchinson's shot.

Photos by
Mike Wencel,
Mike Dilts
and
Rob Lapensee

PROFILES

'Wool King' emphasizes carpet quality

Almost 50 years later, carpet business still going strong

By SHANNON DEARY
Staff Writer

The new millennium brings a new beginning to the "Wool King."

Mitchell Kalagian, of St. Catharines, has run a family-owned and operated carpet business for almost 50 years. Mitchell Rug Ltd. is now at its new location, 2234 Secord Dr., Unit 1 and 2, St. Catharines.

Kalagian said many call him the "Wool King" because of his love of wool carpets.

His store sells wall-to-wall broadloom carpets, hand-made Chinese and Indian rugs, "wool, of course," and special wool Axminster carpets, imported from England, Scotland and Ireland. He said many of the carpets he sells are made for the hotel industry, and he buys the "overflows."

"I enjoy selling good quality carpets." He said he might even sell better rugs than any store in North America.

"I like to sell quality more than colour, but today, the people prefer colour."

He said he started in the trade in 1947 when he worked for Dardarian Rug in Kitchener, Ont. There he learned the trade, focusing mostly on cleaning the carpets.

In 1950, he worked at General Motors before starting his rug business in 1953. For 19 years he worked both jobs, before deciding to run his business full time.

'I like to sell quality more than colour, but today, the people prefer colour.'

"I was raising three children and supporting my wife, so I wanted to be sure of myself before I quit the factory." Kalagian said he didn't like the factory work and wanted to stay in the rug business.

When Kalagian first opened his business on Lake Street in St. Catharines, it was called Mitchell Rug Cleaning. He said he gives many thanks to his wife, Shirley, for helping him clean the hand-made rugs, and giving him all the support he needed.

He spent the next 20 years in Jordan, Ont., on the South Service Road, and changed the name to what it is known as today. He made one more move to Benfield Drive back in St. Catharines, before settling where he is today.

Kalagian said the average carpet installer makes about $50,000 a year.

Outside of work, Kalagian has successfully raised and is very proud of his three children — Janice, 46, Carol Anne, 45, and Nancy, 35. All three daughters teach dance. His oldest daughter, in a combined effort with his youngest daughter, have successfully run their own dance studio for the past 27 years. Janice has recently started another studio in Stratford. Carol Anne teaches the dance program at Grey Gables School in St. Catharines.

'I was raising three children and supporting my wife, so I wanted to be sure of myself.'

He said his parents are originally from Armenia, where they had some "tough times" raising five boys and a girl.

One of Kalagian's childhood memories was when "we all went down to the Armenian Church and played Pinochle downstairs as a young Canadian, with some of the older Armenian men."

Outside of the business, Kalagian said his favourite hockey team has always been the Detroit Red Wings "because of Gordie Howe, of course," and his favourite actress is the talented Shirley Temple. They all epitomize quality, as he does.

Mitchell Kalagian displaying carpets in his new warehouse at the new location.

Photo by Shannon Deary

Full responsibility comes with living alone

Success or failure totally in her hands, nobody else's

By JENNIFER MAGO
Staff Writer

First semester is over and first-year students may now be learning all there is to know about college.

"It's a great learning experience," said Kathryn Kennedy, 19, of the Broadcasting — Radio, Television and Film program at Niagara College.

Kennedy said college has showed her what she's capable of, such as taking care of herself and making her own decisions without the help of her parents. She's learned a lot about responsibility, especially doing laundry and shopping for food.

She adds she no longer has her mother to knock on her door and tell her to get up in the morning, so her own decision making begins the moment she wakes up. Kennedy is living with two roommates and said she feels it has helped her learn courtesy and home keeping.

She lives an hour and a half away from her original home in Uxbridge, Ont. Kennedy said she enjoys making decisions and not having to answer to anyone, but misses her family.

"I miss the everyday things," especially her mother's dinners, she says. Dinner at home was an everyday sit-down occasion. It was a way for her family to get together and talk about their daily events. When Kennedy has dinner she usually tries to make a warm home meal, but it is eaten on her own while watching television or having a conversation with her roommates.

Even though she cannot make it home often, Kennedy said, "I love where I'm living now." She went looking for places in the summer and said she feels "very lucky" to be where she is.

'I think this first year will set an example for me next year.' — Kathryn Kennedy

"It's close to the school, (it's) nice and clean, and my landlord is extremely compatible."

To pay for school Kennedy took a loan from the bank and worked for money in the summer. This first year, she said, is teaching her the limits of money.

"I have money problems when it comes to my social life and groceries," said Kennedy.

"I think this first year will set an example for me for next year." She said she hopes it'll help her make wiser choices next year.

Kennedy said she thinks college opens a lot of doors.

"The first year teaches you that the world is bigger than your home town."

By that she means a person's hometown shapes him or her, and going away to college shows a person the world is full of all kinds of different people. She said she even feels her friends are different.

"Back home, friends follow each others' trends, but here you complement one another and are more of individuals."

As she tries to manage school and a social life, school is her main priority, Kennedy said. She uses her social life as a way to relieve her stress at school. "I compromise — depending on how important and busy the next day is — on if I'll go out or not."

Kennedy said she likes the college because it gives her full responsibility for herself. Whether she shows up for school or not, her success or failure is totally in her hands.

To new students next year in her program, Kennedy said she wants them to know the second and third year students can provide a "sister or brother relationship," and everyone is very supportive.

The program organizes fund-raisers and events which, she feels, make the students more of a group.

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MEN'S ATHLETICS

Knights sink Sault

By RAM KRISHNAMURTHY
Staff Writer

The Niagara Knights men's basketball team made it two wins in a row with a commanding 92-75 win over the Sault College Cougars in the Jan. 20 game at the Welland campus gymnasium.

'We stepped up our defensive game tonight, and that's what really helped us win.'

The Knights took a comfortable 46 to 34 lead into halftime before running up the scoreboard in the second half. Once again, Ernell Ellis led the Knights' offensive attack against the Sault Ste. Marie team with 19 points.

However, it wasn't the team's 92-point performance that impressed Ellis the most. "We stepped up our defensive game tonight. That's what really helped us win."

The Knights appeared to have this game well in control right from the opening tip-off. They controlled play and took advantage of the Cougars' mistakes. Also providing a strong performance for the

'We played with confidence, and we played to win.'

Knights was Andrew Higgins, who scored 17 points.

The Knights improved their league record to three wins and two losses. If the Knights keep this streak of solid play going, they could soon find themselves ranked in the top 15 in the country.

"We played with confidence, and we played to win," said Ellis.

The Knights next see action tomorrow night at Mohawk College in Hamilton. The next home game will be Feb. 4 when the Knights host Lambton College of Sarnia.

Knights' guard Kyle Handrahan (20) drives the lane and goes up for a reverse against the Sault College Cougars of Sault Ste. Marie, in game action on Jan. 20. The Knights up-ended the Cougars 92-75.

Photo by Mike Wencel

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Dan Patterson, Niagara College president (left), and Ray Sarkis, director of athletics, present Haldon Hutchinson with game MVP accolades for the men's OCAA All-Star game, held at Niagara College.

Photo by Robert Lapensée

Hutchinson wins MVP

By JASON VIZBULIS
Staff Writer

The 12th annual Men's Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) All-Star game was played in front of a packed house at the Welland campus on Jan. 22.

Highlighting the night was Niagara's Haldon Hutchinson's being named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) for the West squad.

Hutchinson, a 6'1" guard from Brampton, who is in the Business Administration program, said, "I didn't think I was the MVP. I thought Shane Boscoe was the MVP. I only scored two points but I made a lot of good passes."

Boscoe is a guard from Sheridan College in Oakville. He had six points and was the MVP of last year's all-star game at Durham College, in Oshawa.

Hutchinson was just happy to be in the lineup. "I didn't think I was going to play. I have a really bad groin injury, a charley horse. The trainer gave me the OK right before the game and I didn't get to play as many minutes as I liked but it was OK."

Niagara's other entry in the game was Ernell Ellis, a 6'5" forward from Brampton, who is in the General Arts and Science program. Ellis said, "I think I played well considering this is the third game in a row we played. I didn't feel tired at all. I just had fun."

Ellis, scoring eight points in the game, was impressed by the crowd. "I thought it brought a lot of people together. There is never that many people here."

At half- time the West team was leading the game 42-36 over the East. The second half saw the East team take control. The final score was East 90-West 69.

The highlight of the night was a thundering one-handed dunk by the East's Dion Horsford from George Brown College in Toronto. The dunk brought the fans out of their seats to give Horsford a standing ovation.

Niagara College's Athletic Director Ray Sarkis said, "A far as I was concerned it was fantastic. I got a lot of great comments from the people that were here." Sarkis estimated the crowd at around 500 people.

Sarkis said the event was promoted all over the community.

"We gave out to every public school and high school free passes. Our main goal was to get people out here."

Sarkis also praised the athletes. "These guys didn't get paid for this. They're down here representing their school. It's a well-kept secret that we have some of the best athletes in the nation (in the OCAA)."

WOMEN'S ATHLETICS

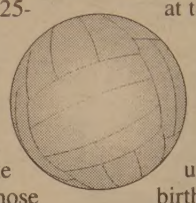
Back on track after two straight wins

By MIKE WENCEL
Staff Writer

The women's volleyball team is back on track after two straight wins over Sault College.

On Jan. 20 the Knights hosted the first match of the doubleheader weekend against the Sault, squeaking by for the win.

The women started off slowly in the game, serving point for point throughout the entire match before eventually winning 25-20, 25-21, 19-25 and 26-24.



Playing against an easier team at the college level, the women had a tough time putting the Sault team away.

The Knights' bench was a little short the first two sets as two starters broke team rules and were suspended for those sets."It wasn't the prettiest game, and we fell far away from our game plan," said Laura Chatterton, assistant coach.

"For tomorrow's match we need to get back to our game plan and set the tempo right from the beginning."

"We also need to improve on our hitting," said Chatterton.

Top players for the Knights were Vickey Smith with seven kills, five blocks and one ace, and Jenn Carpenter with eight kills, one block and one ace.

The women who came out and dominated the Sault on Jan. 21 were a totally different team from the previous night's.

"We played with more intensity and more like a team," said Carpenter.

"They (Sault) showed us that we have to play hard every match, even if they're a weaker team." Carpenter, who took control with her kills and stuffed blocks, dominated the Sault front line at the net the entire match.

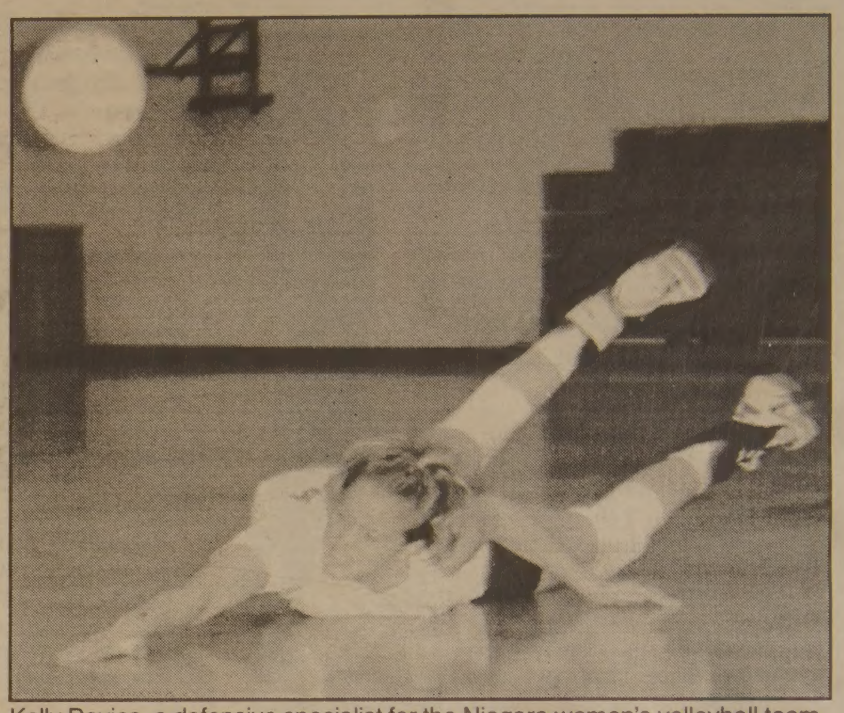
"Our team is communicating well and working together better as a team," said Carolyn Schatz, head coach of the Knights.

"These games were really big wins for us if we want to compete for a playoff birth in the future."

The Knights, who are now 4-5, need to win every game to make the playoffs, depending on what the other teams do. They could afford one more loss if there is an upset in other competition and pick up a wild card berth into the playoffs.

Carpenter dominated the offence and was the only player to reach double digits with five kills, the stuffed blocks, and five serving aces. The women won three straight 25-19, 26-24 and 25-13.

The Knights' next home stand is on Jan. 28 against Humber College from Toronto.



Kelly Davies, a defensive specialist for the Niagara women's volleyball team, goes for the pancake attempt in league action against the Sault on Jan. 21.
Photo by Mike Wencel

Women's basketball all-stars light up gym

Candace Oxford, left, of Niagara College, who scored seven points for team Begg, tries to outmanoeuvre her opponent from team Bacvar in the All-Star game.
Photo by Mike Dilts

By MIKE DILTS
Staff Writer

No cloudy day will stop these stars from shining.

The Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) women's basketball All-Stars' finesse lit up the gym at Niagara College's gym in Welland on Jan. 22.

"You get a great game when you get the best girls," said Georgie Groat, the coach of the Begg All-Star team, along with Craig Andrew, coach of the women's basketball team at Durham College in Oshawa. "They are smart enough girls that they can get together and feed off each other's traits."

Groat, who is the coach for Niagara Knights women's basketball team, said she was flattered to be chosen as one of the coaches for the all-star game.

More than 500 spectators watched team Begg, who wore the gold home uniform, and team Bacvar, who wore the navy blue away uniform, play a close, fast-paced basketball game.

Bacvar kept itself tight with Begg in a 34-33 first half. The tightness loosened when Begg raised its performance by a couple of levels in the last 10 minutes of the second half, thanks to Stephanie Brembridge, of George Brown College in Toronto. She scored 12 points in the second half and had 18 points altogether.

Candace Oxford, a Business Administration — Operations Management program student at Niagara College in Welland, was scoreless in the first but got seven points in the second to help give Begg a 17-point lead for an 87 to 70 victory.

"The last 10 minutes is where we took advantage," said Oxford, 21, of Niagara Falls. "We got ahead and stayed ahead. It was fun and everybody was well rounded."

"It was really, really fun, not really serious," said Tasha Warwick, a Correction Worker program student at Niagara, who got two points for the Begg team. Warwick, of London, Ont., went on to say she was surprised to have been chosen for the all-star game because it is her first year on the Niagara women's basketball team.

'You get a great game when you get the best girls.'
— Georgie Groat

The two Most Valuable Players were Jocelyn Getsinger, of team Begg, from Fanshawe College in London, who scored 14 points, and Brenda Chambers, of team Bacvar, from Humber College in Etobicoke, who scored 16 points.

Fanshawe College, Durham College, Niagara College, George Brown College and Mohawk College in Hamilton represented the Begg All-Star team.

Humber College, Seneca College in North York, Georgian College in Barrie and Redeemer College in Ancaster represented the Bacvar All-Star team.

"All the women did very great," said Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College. "It was great to see Niagara College hosting an event where all the colleges are coming together, and it was a great event."

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SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

Dedication of player important to team

Student's passion: playing volleyball with teammates at Niagara

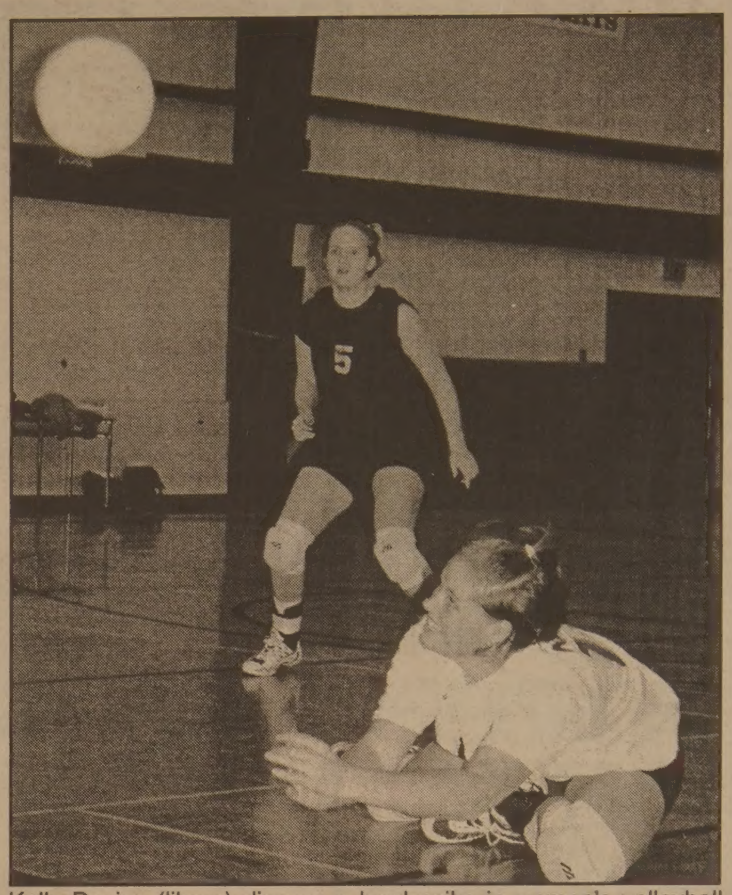
By MIKE WENCEL
Staff Writer

Heart and determination are what Kelly Davies, 22, in her first-year of the Early Childhood Education program, brings to the Niagara women's volleyball team.

'She is one of the quickest players on her feet in the league.'
— Laura Chatterton

Davies, from Chatham, Ont., plays the libero position for the Knights, providing amazing digs and leadership for her team. Because of an injury, Davies was selected to play this position by her coaches to reduce pain in her right shoulder. She had played the power position in the first half of the season.

"I feel lucky that they chose me to play this position knowing how important it really is to the team," said Davies.



Kelly Davies (libero) digs up a hard spike in women's volleyball action.

Photo by Mike Wencel

She has taken the long route to college volleyball, as she formerly attended Brock University in St. Catharines and was cut from the team during tryouts.

"I felt like I was a bad player and that I really sucked, and now they're giving me money to play."

With outstanding court sense, Davies returns more than 90 per cent of the balls spiked at her. How does she read the hitters?

"I have to play a particular spot on the court and, from there, I can read the hitter's shoulder to see if they're going to hit down the line or cross court."

"She is one of the quickest players on her feet in the league," said Laura Chatterton, assistant coach.

An aggressive player, Davies hopes to play this position the rest of the year and next year, when she plays again.

"If I don't get the ball then I feel I have let my team down," said Davies.

Davies takes a physical and mental approach to each game as a result of the pressure put on her shoulders each game.

"I like the pressure because I get to pass every ball and dig every spike."

"I really feel the pressure in big games. Because the league is so close and the teams are so even, you must be prepared every day, in and out."

'I feel lucky that they chose me to play this position, knowing how important it really is to the team.'
— Kelly Davies

Because of her injury, Davies said, she misses hitting and blocking, but doesn't regret playing the libero position.

Although Davies "loves" being on the court playing volleyball, she also "loves" the college atmosphere.

"Our team is very close and we do a lot of things together after games and just hang out," she says. "My program is a lot of fun and I really like it."

Although the team is slumping right now, Davies said the team is going to turn around in the second half and make the playoffs.

"The coaches just know so much and they have taught me and the team a lot of things, and they always encourage us to stay positive," said Davies.

Basketball important part of life for student

By TRACEY ALLISON
Staff Writer

Basketball is life.

Katie Simkins, 19, of Ajax, Ont., said she'd give up all her time for basketball.

For as long as she can remember, she said she has always loved the game. She began playing when she was in Grade 7 and joined the school team.

"I've always been good at it. It just came naturally to me," she recalled.

Once she began high school she played every year on the school team and in the Ontario Basketball Association (OBA).

"OBA basketball is great because it is during the off-season and is a league with a very high talent level."

Simkins said basketball is a sport from which she has learned a great deal. "It has increased my confidence, taught me co-operation skills and to be a team player and, of course, it keeps you fit."

Basketball is Simkins's favourite sport. "I love it because it has a great team atmosphere, and it's a popular sport, so there's lots of fans and enthusiasm."

Winning the title of most valuable player of the year when her team finished eighth in Ontario, she said, was one of her greatest accomplishments. Winning the referee's award was one of her greatest moments. It included a cash prize for maintaining the most outstanding performance for a female athlete in her entire high school career.

'It has increased my confidence, taught me co-operation skills and to be a team player and, of course, it keeps you fit.'
— Katie Simkins

When Simkins was 17 her high school team won the Lower Ontario Secondary School Association (LOSSA) title, then went on to win the LOSSA regionals, finishing eighth in Ontario. Articles on her successes have appeared in many local papers and she was profiled in the Toronto Star.

When Simkins was in Grade 12, she was offered scholarships but turned them down because she wanted to continue high school basketball in her final year. The scholarships were offered by a junior college in Philadelphia and the University of South Carolina.

"Unfortunately, the teachers' strike happened in my last year, so there was no team and no scholarships."

Simkins attends Brock University in St. Catharines and is registered in her first year of the Child and Youth Studies program.

"I was disappointed that I didn't play this year, but I felt I would be overloaded for my first year."

Simkins still plays in the OBA and said she didn't want to take on too much. She plans to play for the Brock team next year.

"I really miss being totally busy with basketball," but, she said, she tries to stay involved with intramurals during the school year and will start OBA in January.

"My goals are to hopefully get a scholarship, to always stay playing in a women's league, and to one day coach." Nevertheless, she said, "Basketball will always be a major part of my life."

Activities for teens give them something to do in winter months

By MIKE DILTS
Staff Writer

There is a big day of ball hockey coming up for Welland teens coming up.

On Saturday, Feb. 12 a co-ed teen ball hockey tournament will be held at the Welland Street Hockey Centre at 300 Lincoln St., beside the Lincoln Centre.

In the cold month of February, there's not much for a teenager to do, except hangout at the mall or stay inside staring at the television playing video games. Delphina Pantusa, the youth recreation co-ordinator at the Rose City Centre, in Welland, said she thought it would be fun to give 13- to 18-year-old teens a good way to use their excess energy in a safe environment such as ball hockey.

"I want to give them a broad range of activities," said Pantusa, who, along with Tom Roberts of the Welland Street Hockey Centre, is co-ordinating the tournament. "I asked the owner of the Ball Hockey Centre (Anthony Pasto) if I could do a ball hockey tournament." Pasto sits on the Welland Youth Council.

For teens to score goals and make kick-saves, split-saves, breakaways, slap-shots and body checks it will cost them $150 per team (of up to 12 players) or $12 per person. The money is to cover the cost of the arena and the prizes for the top four teams.

"We are thinking about doing a trophy," said Pantusa, 25. "We really want to appeal to the teens, so we are talking about some sweatshirts or gift certificates."

Pantusa said she is hoping to have at least six teams, and she thought there were four or five teams at the end of January. Each team is guaranteed three games of ball hockey fun.

"This is a good way to spend your day," said Pasto. "You can have a lot of fun and meet a lot of interesting people doing so."

On Saturday, Feb. 19, there will also be an adult mixed tournament. It will cost $250 for each team of up to 15 players. Each team plays three games and there are prizes for the top four teams.

The last day to register, by calling 732-7300, for either the co-ed teen ball hockey or the adult mix tournament, is Feb. 4.

A goalie makes a kick save to keep the game 1-1 in a fun game of ball Hockey at The Welland Street Hockey Centre.

Photo by Mike Dilts

WRESTLING

College students battle it out at EWF event

By JASON VIZBULIS and ROBERT LAPENSÉE
Staff Writers

They came, they fought and they settled nothing at the Empire Wrestling Federation (EWF) show at Niagara College on Jan. 25.

In what was an entertaining match, full of punches, kicks, body slams and a bronco buster for good measure, Andrew "Prettyboy" Hodges and Rory "The East Coast Assassin" Frazier took the battle to the floor and were counted out, leaving unfinished business between the two.

The Niagara College students, fighting in their first match against each other, showed their stuff with their power moves and high-risk manoeuvers. The disappointing finish between the boys from the Niagara College residence leaves the feud between the students (represented by Frazier) and the dons (represented by Hodges) without a declared winner.

The East Coast Assassin, who came to the ring with Kimmy Superfly, said he was happy with the event. "It was pretty tough. It was a lot of fun. I hope everybody enjoyed it. That's what we were trying to get, everybody to love it."

Prettyboy, who was escorted to the ring by his manager Brittney, said he enjoyed performing in front of a large crowd. "It was definitely one of the highlights. It was so much fun looking into the crowd and seeing all my friends and roommates."

Each wrestler blamed the other for the controversial decision. "It was total horse crap," Prettyboy said after the match. "I dominated the match. It was totally not a 10 count. He's lucky he got the 10 count because I would have kicked his ass even more."

At the match's conclusion, Frazier challenged Hodges to a rematch, which was held Jan. 26 when the EWF put on a show at McMaster University in Hamilton.

Interviewed beforehand, The East Coast Assassin said, "I think Andrew is scared about tomorrow night. We're going to McMaster, so I think he knows what's coming to him. He's too much of a prettyboy. He can't wrestle."

The Jan. 25 match between the students highlighted the first time Niagara College had hosted a wrestling event. Dave Rapelje, the college's manager of student life, who helped organize the event, called the EWF card held at the Welland campus gym a success.

"The most exciting part was the Niagara College grudge match," said Rapelje. "Those guys did a great job and the fans really seemed to approve it and they were digging it.

"We got a good crowd out too. We obviously had some here that were here to see some wrestling and they had fun and that is what we were hoping for."

A loud crowd of about 100 fans was banging on the door as early as 7:15 p.m. in hopes of getting a ringside seat when the doors opened at 7:30 p.m. The crowd and the noise level grew as the night went on.

The Student Administrative Council (SAC) organized the event with all proceeds going to the athletic department. During the event, SAC held a contest for the fan who brought the best sign. The winning sign read, "Masturbation is not a crime." The winner walked away with the $50 prize.

The card featured seven other matches and featured a battle royal to determine who would face the EWF heavyweight champion, "The Judge," who hails from "The Hall of Justice." The rules stated that every two minutes an additional wrestler would come to the ring to try to toss as many other wrestlers over the top rope as possible. After the dust settled and bodies flew, Ricky Stardust won the match without applying as little as a head lock when the last two wrestlers simultaneously fell out of the ring when he was entering.

Despite the controversial finish, the final match was set: The Judge versus Stardust. Both wrestlers got their shots in and showed the crowd a wide variety of holds, manoeuvers, pinfalls and submissions. The last five minutes of the match had each wrestler trying his finishing move and attempting a pin. This led to numerous two counts with each wrestler kicking out just in time to avoid the loss.

The Judge eventually won with a power bomb followed by a submission move. He locked Stardust's leg behind his back while sitting on him. He then put pressure on his back, causing him to scream in pain and submit to the champ.

The Judge was impressed with his performance. "I destroy everybody in my way. I'll continue to destroy all my competition. I'll fight anybody in the EWF or any other independent federation. I'll destroy them all."

The Judge won his title on July 4, 1999, and has no plans to give it up. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm gonna have the longest title reign in EWF history."

Victoria, the Judge's manager, said she enjoyed performing at Niagara College. "It's a lot more personal. They're pretty loyal fans. They really got into the show. I've done shows in Welland before and the fans are crazy." The Judge agreed.

"University and college crowds are good crowds."

Rory "The East Coast Assassin" Frazier gets body slammed by Andrew "Prettyboy" Hodges. The two wrestlers are students at Niagara College living in residence at the Welland campus.
Photo by Jason Vizbulis

Andrew "Prettyboy" Hodges punches Rory "The East Coast Assassin" Frazer during their match on Jan. 25. The fight ended in a double count out. The event was put on by the Students Administrative Council with all proceeds going to the Athletic Department.
Photo by Jason Vizbulis

SPORTS VIEWS

WWF superstar releases best-selling novel

By ROBERT LAPENSÉE
Staff Writer

At first glance, Mankind's best-selling book, Have a Nice Day, is a little scary to look at because of the picture of the demented one on the front cover. A look inside reveals the story of Mankind unplugged, out in the open and in his own words.

Flipping to the front pages of the autobiography begins the incredible journey Mick Foley (aka Mankind, aka Cactus Jack, aka Dude Love) has endured throughout his career.

Have a Nice Day, published by Harper Collins, is an open, honest and humourous look behind the scenes of professional wrestling by a man who has earned every dollar he made in the sport he loves so much.

The World Wrestling Federation (WWF) superstar talks about his life. Everything from growing up in East Setauket, N.Y., to deceiving his parents to go watch wrestling in New York City, to his years as a lacrosse player at his old high school, to his "substandard sexual abilities," to his time wrestling in Japan. He talks about the people he likes and the people he doesn't like, and he doesn't hesitate to talk frankly about them in his book. He doesn't hesitate at all when talking about his problem when he was with the World Championship Wrestling or about his feelings when Vince McMahon double-crossed Bret "The Hitman" Hart right out of the WWF. Foley speaks from the heart and has fun doing it. He continually pokes fun at fellow wrestler and good friend Al Snow.

The writing and photos in Foley's 503-page book are terrific. Foley said he didn't want a ghostwriter or another author working on the project with him because he didn't want to water down his history, ideas and honesty with someone else's "creative license." Instead, the hardcore legend handed in his stories for the book on 700-plus handwritten pages of notebook paper. Foley, whose mother used to encourage him to write, writes the way he talks. Because he is a natural storyteller, the result is a book that is an easy and enjoyable read. When you read through this book, you can hear Mankind's voice speaking the words on the pages.

The best aspect of this book is that Foley steps out of character to tell you his stories. There are no angels being advanced in this book, nor are there any phoney one-liners when Foley is talking about his fellow wrestlers. He gives an honest look at his career in the business of sports entertainment.

The book is a good read and a terrific accomplishment for Foley, who has already accomplished a great deal. Mankind's mother should be proud because he finally used his writing skills. Whenever Foley wrestles, he will have to be known from now on as the hard core legend/best-selling author Mankind.

The book went on sale in September. Chapter's bookstore in the Fairview Mall in St. Catharines is selling the book for $39.50.

Here's something new to kick off the millennium. I'll ask a trivia question, and you answer it. You can e-mail me the your name, program and answer to niagaranews@yahoo.com.

The first person to answer correctly this week will win two passes to Titanic: the Exhibition at the CNE grounds. It is all for fun, so give it a try.

Here's the question for this week: Who did Bret "The Hitman" Hart defeat to capture his first World Championship Wrestling heavyweight title?

Woods making another run at PGA championship

By RAM KRISHNAMURTHY
Staff Writer
Column

The 2000 Professional Golf Association (PGA) golf season is under way, not that the golf season ever comes to an end. This is the time when golfers start to really focus on some big goals.

Tiger Woods, 24, from Florida, is continuing his amazing run at piling up victory after victory, as evidenced by his win at the Mercedes Championship two weeks ago. What's even more amazing is how Woods remains so dominant with such a strong field of competition.

The PGA tour was in the Hawaiian stretch of tournaments before moving on to the Florida swing of the tour. After that, the year's first major comes from Augusta, Ga., followed by the U.S. Open, which will be played at the world-renowned Pebble Beach course.

The U.S. Open will be a time of reflection on the loss of the defending champion of the event, Payne Stewart, who died in a bizarre plane crash last October. When we look ahead to this golf season, it is still hard to believe the golf world has lost such a great champion.

Aside from anticipating another year of Woods' greatness, expect big things from David Duval, 28, also from Florida, who has gotten himself into excellent physical condition. Now let's hope, for Duval's sake, it will result in excellent golf past the month of March. For the record, I believe Duval is more than capable of doing just that.

Other choices for potential winners this year include *Ernie Els, 30, of South Africa, and Vijay Singh, 36, of Fiji.* Both of these players have displayed solid performances in the past by winning majors. Now they're looking to show the world they're logical alternatives to Woods when it comes to winning.

Another player I believe has an opportunity to regain his form of past years is Greg Norman, 46, of Florida. For a long period of time, Norman was ranked as the world's top golfer. Although he is nowhere near that plateau now, the Shark is more determined than ever to return to premier status.

Norman has been plagued by injuries the last couple of years. His nagging shoulder problems have apparently subsided and Norman is committed to competing in a relatively full schedule in 2000.

Norman is a veteran of the game; he knows what it takes to win. I predict that once again Norman will be right in the thick of things when the final round at this year's Masters rolls around. Despite his several final round setbacks at Augusta, Norman still has the poise to make yet another attempt at donning the green jacket.

Norman still has the poise to make yet another attempt at donning the green jacket.

From a Canadian standpoint, it will be interesting to see how Mike Weir, 29, of Sarnia, Ont., will fare on tour. He opened many eyes last year with some solid play. Now let's see if he can himself into a complete player.

This golf year has all the makings to be as great as, and I think greater than, last year. If Woods repeats his dominance it will be great to see. If he receives steady competition, that will also be great.

Leafs deny Sundin trade talks

By RAM KRISHNAMURTHY
Staff Writer
Column

National Hockey League Toronto Maple Leaf coach and general manager Pat Quinn denies his club has conducted any conversations with the Philadelphia Flyers on a major trade involving Mats Sundin and Eric Lindros.

Quinn could very well be telling the truth when he says no discussions have been held about his captain.

However, for discussion purposes, let's just say there is some truth to the Sundin-for-Lindros rumour. Would it be worthwhile for the Leafs to consider such a transaction?

If I were a member of the Leafs' front office, I'd say pass on such a deal.

Make no mistake — Lindros is a player who can be explosive. If he can remain healthy he could be a serious asset for a big playoff run, despite the fact his past playoff performances have not been great. However, don't you think this kind of a trade would be classified as a major shakeup?

Do the Leafs really need a major shakeup? Many Leaf fans get excited at the notion of Lindros perhaps donning the blue and white, but all this talk about dealing Sundin sounds as if the Leafs are a club struggling, looking to change things.

The simple fact is the Leafs are not struggling. They have remained on a consistent roll all season, so why risk jeopardizing that success? Why risk harming the positive chemistry on the team?

The Flyers have been on a tremendous roll as well, but this potential transaction might make a little sense for them, as they have been lacking something in the post-season for the past several years.

Sundin may not be as explosive as some would like, but he is dependable. He clearly gets the job done. The Leafs are a strong team. They are, without question, serious contenders.

The next time you hear such a rumour, take into consideration how good the Leafs are currently and if such a shakeup is really needed.

Titans will win Super Bowl

By JASON VIZBULIS
Staff Writer
Column

Tennessee and St. Louis in the Super Bowl. Something here doesn't sound right.

These two teams used be the cellar dwellers of the National Football League. In fact, five years ago neither team was even located in the city each calls home.

These two former Charlie Brown teams will face each other in Super Bowl XXXIV in Atlanta, Ga., on Sunday.

They will try to prove to the world that they belong, in a game that has received about as much hype as a Tonya Harding wrestling match.

However, this game has real potential. Both teams have great running backs. The Rams' Marshall Faulk and Titans' Eddie George will both establish a powerful ground attack. The quarterbacks are equally average with former arena-football star Kurt Warner for the Rams and Steve McNair for the Titans.

Defence will win this game and the Tennesse Titans have the star. Rams' linebacker Jevon "The Freak" Kearse will make Warner's Super Bowl experience unpleasant if not a short one. He has been hunting quarterbacks all season and won't stop now. This guy not only gets the sacks, but also gives quarterbacks nightmares with the number of fumbles he causes them to make.

Then there's fate. The Titans beat the Buffalo Bills with a one-in-a-million last-minute play and then got by the favoured Jacksonville Jaguars on pure grit and determination.

This will be a good, close game that's worthy of watching till the end.

Move over Travis Twitt, Dolly Parton, Garth Brooks and Allan Jackson. There's a new sheriff in town and it's called the Super Bowl Champs. Titans 24, Rams 21.

ENTERTAINMENT

Sirota laughs with audience members

By MIKE DILTS
Staff Writer

His laughing at his own jokes made Ian Sirota even funnier at the packed After Hours pub at Niagara College in Welland on Jan. 19.

Sirota, 35, of Montreal, had the audience laughing with him. Every time he told a joke, he would laugh as if he were hearing it for the first time. His facial and body expressions gave his jokes more of a comic flair. His phony, clipped, thick German accent, stiff posture and stern face made his impression of a Nazi comedian almost believable because he was so authentic.

For nine years, Sirota has been doing stand up and said he saw someone else do it, so he thought he could do it too.

"That's why I got into comedy," said Sirota. "I just started doing it and I enjoy it, so I kept doing it. I love the audience's reaction and that's why I'll keep doing it."

The comedian has opened for such celebrities as Denis Leary, Norm Macdonald and Jon Stewart. In 1995, he has appeared, on the YTV sketch television program called It's Alive and has co-written, directed and filmed the comedy pilot Sunshine Moonshine.

Last Friday, Jan. 21, Sirota displayed his comedic talent at Yuk Yuk's in Mississauga. He lives in New York City.

The second comedian, Stephen Cox, put on a brilliant show but was cut short because of hecklers on Jan. 18.

> ***'I just start doing it and I enjoy it, so I kept doing it. I love the audience's reaction and that's why I'll keep doing it.'***
> ***— Ian Sirota***

"I only did maybe 20 minutes of my show," said Cox, of Toronto. "The audience was tired, so they started to get a little restless and I felt I had to address them more as the show went on, so I left the stage."

When Cox asked the audience how they have safe sex, a male audience member screamed out, "Anal!" and for the rest of Cox's show that person kept yelling anal.

"The more I just stayed off on my material, the more rowdy they started to get and they started yelling stuff," said Cox, who's in his 30s.

The stand-up comedian's impression of Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien made the audience see, with delightful hilarity, what it would be like if Chrétien were a comedian.

He had a spectator turning red when he started making fun of Sarah Penny, 18, a General Arts and Science student at Niagara College in Welland, when she said she likes flavoured condoms.

"I didn't mind. It was hilarious," said Penny, of St. Catharines, Ont. "It was the best show I have seen so far."

Cox said he "fell into" comedy and that he was always a "class clown."

"I used to be in a band called Platinum Blond and they said I was funny and that I should be a comedian," said Cox, "so a couple of times I opened for the band. When we finished the tour, that's when I started at Yuk Yuk's doing amateur nights."

Since 1986, the stand-up comedian has opened for Glass Tiger, Honeymoon Suite, Gowan, and Doug and The Slugs. He has appear on Open Mike with Mike Bullard, Much Music, CityTV's Citypulse News and two episodes of CHCH-TV's Comedy at Club 54.

He said his favourite performace was opening for Buddy Guy, a talented blues musician, at the Exhibition in the Molson Tent in Toronto.

"After the show, Buddy Guy came up to me and said 'Hey man, that was fantastic and you can rock at my house anytime,'" said Cox.

> ***'I used to be in a band called Platinum Blond and they said I was funny and that I should be a comedian'***
> ***— Stephen Cox***

"Can you imagine that? Buddy Guy is a legend."

On Friday, Jan. 21, Cox performed at Mohawk College in Hamilton.

Ian Sirota, 35, of Montreal, displays his comedic talent to a full After Hours pub at Niagara College in Welland.

Photo by Mike Dilts

Stephen Cox, of Toronto, gave a short but hilarious performance at the After Hours pub.

Photo by Mike Dilts

CD brings back memories of Kaufman

By JENNIFER ATANAS
Staff Writer

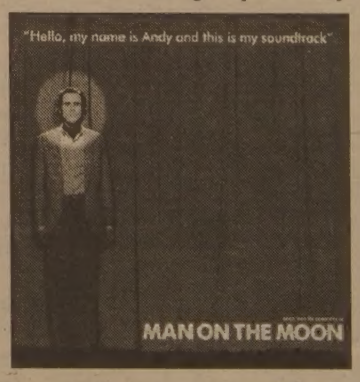
The movie Man on the Moon and its accompanying soundtrack complement each other.

If you enjoyed the film, you'll appreciate it more when you hear this music.

The soundtrack score was created and performed by R.E.M, who introduced us to comedian Andy Kaufman eight years ago. The title track to the movie is found on R.E.M.'s 1992 release **Automatic For The People.**

The CD not only provides the listener with clips from the movie featuring the characters performed by Jim Carrey and Courtney Love, but it introduces Kaufman himself.

One More Song For You and *Rose Marie* are songs previously recorded and performed by Kaufman.



Having the opportunity to hear Kaufman's humour and talent is a benefit.

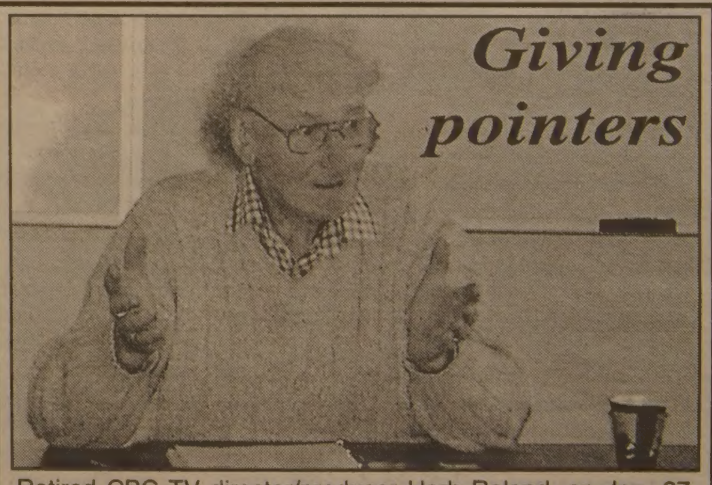
The CD brings back memories of laughs, and possibly tears, shed during the film.

Owning a copy of the **Man on the Moon** CD acts as a great substitute for the movie, while you anticipate the day when the video can be purchased.

With such songs as *This Friendly World, I Will Survive, Mighty Mouse* and the theme songs to Kaufman's television sitcom Taxi, this CD should be in your collection if you love to laugh.

Go see the movie. Then purchase the CD. They go well together.

Giving pointers



Retired CBC TV director/producer Herb Roland, on Jan. 27, spoke to Screenwriting Post-graduate students about writing, directing, producing and how scripts are accepted.

Photo by Jason Vizbulis

ENTERTAINMENT

A celebration at Niagara Heritage Showcase

By CRAIG STRATYCHUK
Staff Writer

Come celebrate and learn about Ontario's wide and diverse history.

On Saturday, Feb. 19, Pelham Public Library, at the Fonthill Plaza off Highway 20 and Pelham Street, plays host to the 10th annual Niagara Heritage Showcase.

In celebration of Heritage Month in Ontario, heritage organizations around the Niagara region will gather to showcase their contributions to interpreting and preserving the province's history.

Tony Whelan, of the Niagara Regional Historical Council, in Welland, says the Showcase will bring many heritage units together to collectively inform the public of what Ontario has to offer.

There will be 50 displays throughout the library, including woodworking, sheep sheering and music, as well as various demonstrations, exhibits and special presentations.

Members of the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre will participate by performing native dancing and by teaching some aspects of native history.

"It's a family thing," says Whelan, adding, children can learn from the hands-on style of exhibits.

Whelan says he hopes in the future the Canadian government will make a holiday for heritage preservation. For Whelan that is now just a thought, so the Showcase is his way of teaching the public to recognize the province's history.

Admission for the Niagara Heritage showcase is free. Coffee and donuts will be served all day. Doors open at 9 a.m.

Music, parties, parade at Welland Winter Carnival

By SHANNON PALOMAKI
Staff Writer

Bring your family and friends out of winter hibernation during February and join the fun at the 37th annual Welland Winter Carnival.

Activities will be held around the city and take place from Feb. 4 to Feb. 27.

The various events include a coronation ball, family free skating, snow poker rally with prizes between $50 and $100, snowmobile rides, a luncheon with music by the Melodiers, a skating party and a pancake breakfast.

A snowmobile parade will begin on Feb. 13 at noon proceeding from the Lincoln Centre Mall to Welland Arena. From 10 a.m., at the arena, people can enjoy a free pancake breakfast that will be followed by girl's hockey until 12:30 p.m.

Between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. the Welland Figure Skating Club will perform an ice show. Snowmobile rides and children's skating races will also be held.

Between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., there will be family free skating during which the snow prince and princess will be chosen from the youngest boy and girl on regular skates.

French Canadian Carnival Day is Feb. 20. For $3 admission, people can enjoy a breakfast, the petting zoo, pony rides, a penny sale and a special ski competition between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Adult games of ski and snowshoe races, nail driving and log sawing will be from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

People can enjoy the Help a Child Smile hockey game on Feb. 27. The National Hockey League's Buffalo Sabres Alumni versus Team Welland will play at Welland Arena starting at 2 p.m. Tickets cost $5. For more information on the game call 732-1414.

Anyone interested can pick up schedules at Welland Arena, the Rose City Senior's Activity Centre, City Hall and Welland Historical Museum after Jan. 28.

For further information, call Rose Smith, carnival chair, at 732-1515.

Black, white or gay, it should all be included in comedy

By PAUL MOONEY
Staff Writer
Column

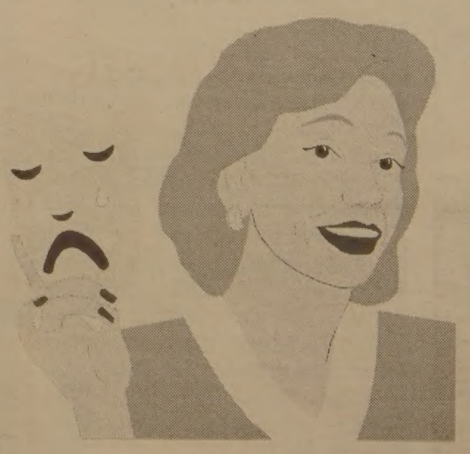
Over the holidays I watched several hours of televised stand up comedy. Some of the acts I really enjoyed, but overall I thought the majority of the content was boring.

After watching about three straight hours of the Comedy Network, I started to develop a thesis as to why I was only laughing sporatically as opposed to constantly.

At the risk of sounding like a Nazi bigot, I'll share my conclusion with you all: there were very few jokes made in reference to race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. I like jokes about all of the above.

Comedians seem so caught up in being politically correct, their acts lack substance.

Has anybody seen Eddie Murphy, in his video Raw? Or any comedy material released in the late 1980s and early 1990s? That was funny stuff. The lack of consideration for ethnicity and cultural bias made it daring as well.



Comedians seem so caught up in being politically correct, their acts lack substance. Now, how can "making fun" of racial minorities or homosexuality be considered worthwhile material? It is because such topics are examples of the many improprieties of society.

Some sociology professors may suggest discrimination is encouraged by public acts of discriminatory content, like stand up comedy. I do not agree. I believe that making light of our differences through humour is one of the best ways to promote unity. We have to learn to laugh at ourselves: black, white, gay, whatever!

I believe that making light of our differences through humour is one of the best ways to promote unity. We have to learn to laugh at ourselves: black, white, gay, whatever!

It's ignorant to assume that by keeping our mouths shut or referring to a "politically correct" textbook before making a humourous comment will result in everyone holding hands and singing, "We are the world." Lighten up a bit people and laugh.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Niagara News Publishing Schedule

Feb. 4/00	March 10/00
Feb. 11/00	March 17/00
Feb. 18/00	March 24/00
BREAK WEEK	April 7/00
	April 21/00

THE Niagara News does not attest to the claims of any employment opportunity and encourages all those interetsed in any position offered to fully research every opportunity.

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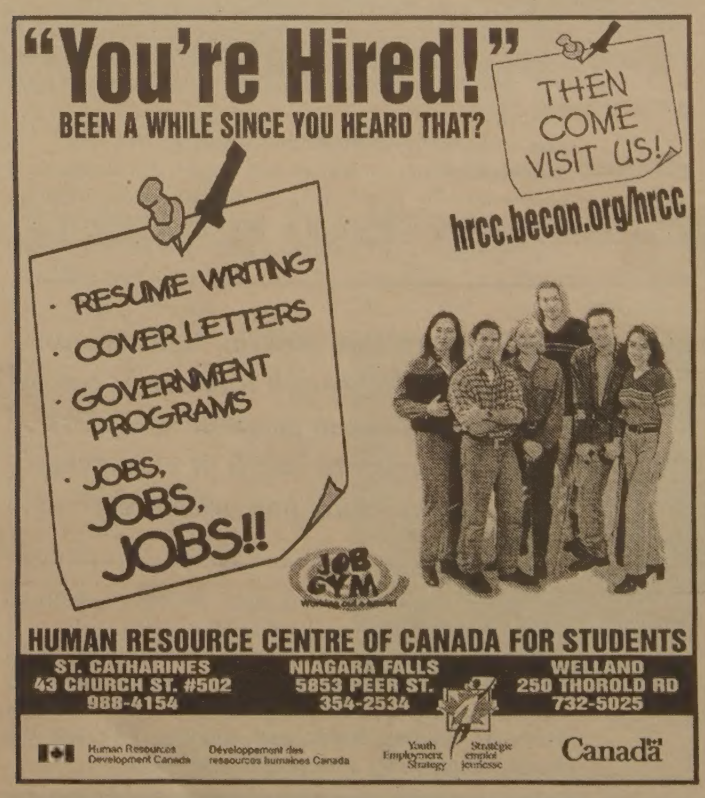

LEGACY 2000

Terry Hughes (far right), group facilitator of capitalizing on Welland's natural resources, and two members discuss where landscape clean-up should begin.

Photo by Cassandra Simons

Making Welland a better city

By CASSANDRA SIMONS
Staff Writer

The talking is over; now comes the action.

Residents of Welland gathered Jan. 24 at the Welland Market Square Legacy 2000 meeting to determine what resources the community has to build a better Welland — one project at a time.

Legacy 2000 held its first meeting in June 1998. It was organized by a small group of business and community volunteers. There were more than 50 people at the meeting.

"There's no one expert for every area of the community's needs," said Brenda Herchmer, project co-ordinator of the Niagara Centre for Community Life and Leadership. She is also a professor of Recreation and Leisure Services at Niagara College's Welland campus.

Previous meetings were focused on identifying specific areas that needed work and discussing any new ideas, while this meeting's focus was on how the work could be done.

The participants split into separate groups to discuss capitalizing on Welland's natural resources, enhancing the local landscape, developing a vibrant downtown community, new tourism initiatives, meeting the needs of Welland's youth, and co-ordinating community resources and services.

The results of the meeting included strategies to clean up Lyon's Creek and trails, such as Willow Walk on Merritt Island, as well as the establishment of community gardens where individuals could rent a plot to plant whatever they would like.

The youth decided they would like to have a drop-in centre available to teens, but theyhave not finalized their plans.

"It (the meeting) was really about 'just do it,'" said Herchmer.

"'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has,'" Herchmer said, quoting Margaret Mead during the meeting.

Sponsors of Legacy 2000 are the City of Welland, Welland Business and Community Development Corp. (WBCDC), Ontario Healthy Communities, Niagara South Social Safety Network and the Niagara Centre for Community Life and Leadership.

The next Legacy 2000 meeting will be held at the Welland Market Square on Feb. 28. For more information contact the WBCDC at 735-8085.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Somewhere in the Niagara News is the answer to the following question.

What does ACAATO stand for?

The first 4 people to e-mail the correct answer & page location will win a pair of tickets each to

TITANIC *The Exhibition*

in Toronto, Ont.

Act fast, e-mail your answer along with name and phone number to:

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Student Discounts up to 40%
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Thursday February 3rd
5th Annual BEACH BASH
10 Tons of Hot White Sand In the Bar
Free BEACH BALLS
Bring your pail and play in the SAND
BEST "Beach Wear" CONTEST
All Students Must Have Niagara Card
Win one of two FREE TRIPS To Florida for SPRING BREAK
Win A Cell Phone From Cantel
AFTER HOUR PUB
Don't miss this one...
See Ya at the BEACH

PROFILE

Top recruit in Ontario improves men's volleyball

By ROBERT LAPENSEE
Staff Writer

Niagara College has improved its men's volleyball squad by adding the top recruit in Ontario to its roster.

Graeme Gaunt, from Chatham, Ont., is expected to lead the Niagara College Knights men's volleyball team to new heights, says Ray Sarkis, the college's athletic director.

"We are becoming one of the best volleyball programs in the nation," Sarkis said, adding the Knights can become the top team with Gaunt's help.

"Graeme is going to make a great impact on the team. He has already started, as he led the team offensively in their first two games of the season," said Sarkis, relaying the words of coach Blair Cudmore.

Gaunt is described by Sarkis to be the top recruit coming out of high school.

"We feel he has the potential of becoming one of the best players in Ontario," said Sarkis.

Gaunt, living in Welland for the school year, said he played a variety of sports while growing up. He started playing volleyball when he was in Grade 4.

"There wasn't much to do in the winter so I played volleyball," Gaunt said.

He continued to play sports in high school, trying basketball and soccer. He has had his greatest successes in baseball and volleyball, scoring top accolades in each. Colleges and universities in Canada and the U.S. pursued the abilities of the tall 19-year-old in two different sports, baseball and volleyball.

"I got a couple of calls from universities in the States for baseball," said Gaunt, adding he thought he had a better chance at volleyball. He plays the position of power and right side.

Humber College in Oakville, York University and the University of Toronto are some of the schools who were interested in acquiring him for his volleyball talents.

"It was a great experience," said Gaunt, about all the attempts from schools to recruit him. "It was cool to have schools after you like in movies and on television shows."

Sarkis said Gaunt was lured into Niagara's volleyball program with a $1,000 athletic/academic scholarship, the college's academic track record and the chance to play on a team that is a solid contender.

"We offer scholarships to players that we feel will contribute to our program," said Sarkis. "The scholarship isn't reflected for just volleyball. It emphasizes academics as well as commitment to the team."

Sarkis calls Gaunt Niagara's best recruit in a number of years. Maybe he is, as he brings a deep level of experience. Gaunt is a graduate of Chatham Kent High School, a school that offers what Sarkis describes as the best volleyball program in the province.

Gaunt had also played on the provincial team in the summer of 1997.

"It was great," said Gaunt. "We were the 12 best players in Ontario. We went to Winnipeg to play the other provinces in Canada and we ended up winning it.

"It was a great experience playing at that high of a calibre."

Obtaining a scholarship and playing varsity for a college or university were always a goal for Gaunt. While excited about playing at the college, he admits to being nervous when the try-outs started. He became more at ease once he got down to what he came here to do — play volleyball.

"The coach, Blair Cudmore, let us play some matches just to get comfortable on the court."

Gaunt has been performing well. In the first two season games, he led the Knights to victory with strong offensive play.

Graeme Gaunt in his first game for the Niagara College men's volleyball team.
Photo by Robert Lapensée

"He had 16 kills against Georgian College and 15 kills against Seneca College," Sarkis said.

Gaunt is both focused and intense on the court. He keeps his quiet, humble demeanour during play, displaying as much sportsmanship as he does skill. He has been able to remain focused for school as well as games despite the distraction of being away at college and living on his own.

"It's been different. I didn't really know anybody here, " Gaunt said, adding he felt more comfortable once he started playing and befriending other players.

"They have been helping me out a lot. The guys on the team encourage me. They take me out and show me around. They are great."

"I still have to do my initiation, though. I don't know what they are going to make me do," Gaunt said with a nervous but curious smile.

After completing his two-year Law and Security Administration program, Gaunt said he would like to continue playing volleyball at the university level, but is unsure. He said he'd also like to play in the Olympics or in Europe on the professional circuit, but admits he has a lot of work to do to get there.

"I'm strong in my hitting. I'm pretty good at defense. The coach tells I have to improve my blocking and passing. I want to work on communication. I would like to work on everything. I want to get better at everything," Gaunt said ambitiously, adding he needs to "beef up" a bit too.

In the meantime, he seems content with playing volleyball for Niagara and studying law and security.

"I didn't really know what I was going to get into. I thought it would be interesting to learn the stuff you have to do to become a cop."

Sarkis is also happy Gaunt is here.

"We are very happy he chose Niagara College over Humber, or other schools who were trying to recruit him.

"He (Gaunt) will be the player that our offence will work around throughout the year and future."

Niagara's men's volleyball team will play undefeated Mohawk College of Hamilton tonight at 8 p.m. This match could determine first place, as Niagara's only regular season loss came about at the hands of Mohawk.

WINTERFEST

W2K kicks off new millennium at Niagara

Story and Photos
By MIRANDA HUBBS
Staff Writer

To kick off the new year the Student Administrative Council (SAC) held the week-long Winterfest 2000 or W2K at After Hours on the Welland campus.

"It's kind of a tradition," says Lee Whitehead, SAC member and W2K co-organizer.

"People come back from the holidays kind of depressed, so it helps them lose those wintertime blahs, have some fun and win prizes."

The week started off with a milk chugging contest. Teams of five downed 12 cartons of milk as fast as they could without spilling it. Some were more successful than others. Team three won that event.

Next there was a Lifesavers toothpick relay. For this event teams had to pass a Lifesavers candy from one person to the next using a toothpick in their mouths. The team with the most Lifesavers in their bowl was team four.

On the second day, there was a Jell-O-sucking contest. It was a very messy scene with whipped cream and Jell-O all over the contestants and the stage. Team two took first place in that event. They also won the scavenger hunt.

Let the games begin!

The fun continued on day three, with an airband contest. Teams brought in their own music to which they could lip-sync.

First up was team on,e who imitated the Spice Girls. They pranced across the stage shaking and showing off what they had, real and fake.

Next was team five. They sang to a song from the movie The Lion King, but were less entertaining than the other acts.

Team four performed a song from the movie The Rocky Horror Picture Show. They were dressed like those in the movie and if you have seen it, well, let's leave it at that.

Team three went with some older rock 'n' roll tunes from AC/DC. They put on a show like a real concert, with the lights, instruments and even pulled a "fan" on stage from the audience.

Last but not least was team two. They performed a melody of songs starting with the Backstreet Boys, Right Said Fred, and the Spice Girls. They were missing a team member but were not penalized for it. This team also showed off a little skin.

When the four judges tallied their scores it was team four who came out first, with team two in second, team three in third, team one in fourth, and team five in fifth.

Winterfest was supposed to start last week but was postponed because of a lack of interest and not enough teams.

"At first there were only two teams, so we postponed it and three more teams signed up, so we're happy," says Whitehead.

The budget for this year was $4,000 but that was more than enough to fund events. The unused money will go back into SAC's fund for other projects.

Freeze Ball!

Got Milk?

A real Rocky Horror Picture Show

Team two is in first place overall as Niagara News went to press. The final results weren't available until today. The results will be printed in next week's edition of the Niagara News.

The first-place team will get limousine service for six hours, sweatshirts for the whole team and $500 cash. The second-place team will get an MT Bellies gift certificate for $100, sweatshirts and $250 cash. Finally, the third-place team will get $25 CD gift certificates, SAC watches and $100 cash. All contestants will receive W2K T-shirts.

GLENDALE ~ WELLAND
SAC
~ MAID OF THE MIST ~